



Back on song: Ian Botham, playing again for England, dismisses Richie Richardson with his second ball in the Texaco Trophy match against West Indies. Report, page 40

Classical revival goes on trial at St Paul's

The Prince of Wales yesterday unveiled a new plan for the St Paul's Cathedral precinct in London. Gavin Stamp pleads for it to be built.

The re-development of Paternoster Square — the area north of St Paul's Cathedral — with the scheme unveiled by Paternoster Associates yesterday is of great importance for British architecture, for it will probably make or break the current Classical revival. Each building proposed for the site — all designed by members of an Anglo-American team of Classical architects — is faced in brick and stone and is overtly Classical.

This reflects the influence of the Prince of Wales, who saw off several semi and totally Modernist schemes for the site in his Mansion House speech in 1987 by comparing the effect of the Luftwaffe on London with that of Lord Holford, planner of the now unfashionable St Paul's Precinct which is to be replaced. Two years later, in his *Vision of Britain*, Prince Charles said that "Paternoster Square has become central to the argument between modernist and traditional architecture, or, as I'd rather put it, the argument between the inhuman and the human."

St Paul's was not intended to be seen in a wide open space. London is not Paris, and following the rejection of his naive post-Great Fire plan for the City, Wren designed a compromise: a building in the new Classical style which fitted in to the tight medieval street plan of London. The enclosure of the old St Paul's Churchyard allowed no distant views, so Wren gave his Cathedral projections and recessions to be appreciated up close. Only the great dome and the upper order of Corinthian pilasters was intended to be seen from afar over the rooftops of the City. When Lord Holford's plan was published in 1956, Sir

Continued on page 20, col 1

Britain heads for clash over EC income tax plan

By WOLFGANG MÜNCHAU, EUROPEAN BUSINESS CORRESPONDENT

THE European Commission is planning to introduce a community-wide income tax in a move that is certain to provoke a new clash with Britain over sovereignty. The proposal will be put to the inter-governmental conference on monetary union later this year and, if approved, incorporated into a revised Treaty of Rome.

Peter Schmidhuber, the budget commissioner who put forward the idea, said it was designed to guarantee financial autonomy for the community. A senior commission official added: "If we want to move towards a more federal structure, then surely this needs to be reflected in the field of taxation." But that view contrasts sharply with Britain's insistence that matters of taxation must remain

the prerogative of national governments.

The likelihood of conflict over the proposal is increased by a parallel commission plan for the European Parliament to become the main constitutional body overseeing budget and tax policies. At the moment, the real power lies with the Council of Ministers, although the parliament has the right to veto budget proposals. Britain and France are adamantly opposed to such a shift of authority, while a minority of countries, led by Germany, strongly favour a greater role for the parliament.

Commission officials indicated yesterday that the proposed pan-European tax, agreed on May 6 but disclosed only yesterday, would be part of a radical reform of the community's income structure. That now depends largely on creaming off a part of each country's value-added tax receipts. An income tax is the favourite idea "because it is just and linked to ability to pay," one official said, but the commission is also considering an indirect levy on energy — which would lead to higher petrol prices — or a combination of taxes. A European poll tax was not under consideration.

Herr Schmidhuber said in Bonn yesterday that the commission had considered "one or several taxes". That form of words is designed to give the commission maximum leeway and to reduce the expected resistance from some member countries to the necessary adjustment to article 100 of the Treaty of Rome. The revision of the treaty is expected to be completed by the end of the year after the inter-governmental conference on a single European currency and the setting up of a central bank.

At present, the community has four principal sources of income: VAT receipts, customs duties, farm duties and direct contributions from member governments based on their gross national products.

Each country pays the first 1.4 per cent of its VAT revenue to the community, providing about 60 per cent of the EC's 65 billion ecu budget (about £45 billion). Customs duties provide a further 20 per cent and farm levies 5 per cent.

The VAT element renders the equivalent of £81 for every man, woman and child in the community. In theory, each country could reduce its VAT if the commission's proposal were implemented. In Britain, the rate could come down to 16.1 per cent. But in practice, national governments would be probably leave their rates unchanged, use the extra revenue for domestic purposes and levy the European tax on top of other charges.

The idea is bound to renew the controversy over a federal Europe and to provoke fierce resistance from Britain. The Treasury said last night that it was considering its response, but one Conservative MP was quick to condemn the notion.

Nicholas Budgen, MP for Wolverhampton South West, said: "It is absolutely ludicrous. Plainly it is not going anywhere, but it illustrates the quite incredible sense of entitlement of these people that they are prepared to air such views without understanding the sense anger and affront that many people who are opposed to a federal structure in Europe feel about this sort of thing. It is amazing that these European bureaucrats have the nerve to present these as a serious proposal."



Major: series of speeches to promote Tory policies

Summer offensive planned by Tories

By PHILIP WEBSTER, CHIEF POLITICAL CORRESPONDENT

THE cabinet yesterday planned a relentless summer offensive to regain the initiative from Labour and an electoral strategy designed to take the government into next year if John Major decides against an autumn election.

The move came as an opinion poll published last night gave Labour an eight-point lead over the Tories, the widest margin since Mr Major became prime minister. The NOP survey for BBC 2's *Newsnight* programme and *The Independent* put Labour on 44 per cent, the Conservatives on 36, (five points down on last month) and the Liberal Democrats on 15.

Yesterday's cabinet meeting agreed a number of policy documents on health, housing, crime prevention and the citizens' charter to be launched over the next few months. They will be supported by a series of speeches by Mr Major, pulling together the threads of Tory policies.

An attack on Labour policies is also planned with the Tories hoping that Mr Major will be pitted in a presidential style contest against Neil Kinnock, the Labour leader.

NHS trusts, page 8

Sonia Gandhi turns down leadership

FROM CHRISTOPHER THOMAS IN DELHI

SONIA Gandhi yesterday rejected the offer to succeed her assassinated husband, Rajiv Gandhi, as leader of the Congress (I) party. She said in a brief statement that the tragedy that had befallen her and her children "does not make it possible for me to accept the presidency."

Her rejection came as a humiliating blow to the party, struggling to avoid a damaging leadership contest during the throes of the general election. Senior party officials said they might again approach her if an acceptable leader could not be found quickly.

Forensic experts yesterday confirmed that Gandhi was assassinated by a woman who had strapped explosives to her body. The woman, yet to be identified, triggered the blast when she bowed to greet Gandhi, Subodh Kant Sahay, the home affairs minister, said. Subramaniam Swamy, India's law minister, said that prima facie evidence pointed to the involvement of the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam, which is fighting for a separate homeland in Sri Lanka. It has denied any involvement in the killing. The Tigers regarded Gandhi

as an enemy for attempting to close down their bases in the south Indian state of Tamil Nadu, where the former prime minister was killed. He had also ordered Indian troops, stationed in Sri Lanka until 1989 under a government-to-government accord, to try to crush the rebels.

In turning down the Congress presidency, Mrs Gandhi said she was deeply touched by the trust placed in her. She said Jawaharlal Nehru, India's first prime minister, his daughter Indira Gandhi, and Rajiv Gandhi had dedicated their lives to the party and the country. She was confident that their memory and the memory of the sacrifices made by them and other Congressmen and women would "today enable the Congress to emerge even stronger."

Appearing composed, she went to Teen Murti House, where Gandhi is lying in state, and placed two new portraits of her husband near his flag-draped body. Gandhi's son Rahul, who will light the funeral pyre at 4pm today alongside the Jamuna river in Delhi, had his arm around his mother. Thousands of people queued to pay their respects.

At one point a crowd tried to pull the flag away but police beat them back.

Congress leaders around the country continued to heap praise on Mrs Gandhi, saying she would make an excellent party leader, while rival parties said the attempt to enlist her was proof of Congress's bankruptcy. The failure of the party's policy-making body to consult her before unanimously electing her as president was a humiliating blunder. It was clearly aware of her reluctance to enter politics, and had attempted by its tactics to cajole her into taking up the mantle.

Political uncertainty increased last night with reports that President Venkataraman had taken informal soundings about the possibility of forming a government of national unity. Senior politicians said he gave them the impression that he was willing to cancel the final phases of the election.

Police hunt, page 9
Leading article, page 15

Baltic border posts wrecked by troops

FROM ANATOL LIEVEN IN VILNIUS

SOVIET troops yesterday destroyed Latvian and Lithuanian border posts along the whole line of the two republics' common border, leaving several Baltic border guards severely beaten.

The Soviet units came from Latvia and reportedly consisted of paratroopers and Black Beret special forces. Two Latvian posts on the border with the Soviet republic of Belorussia were also destroyed.

The Latvian government has protested to President Gorbachev. Balts are asking themselves to what extent the

Soviet High Command in the Baltic is acting without the approval of the president.

The attacks appear to form part of a concerted military campaign against the Baltic republics' attempts to set up sovereign frontiers. Andrius Butkevicius, director of the Lithuanian National Security Department, alleged the attacks were connected with attempts by Lithuania's Polish minority to set up their own autonomous region in the Vilnius area.

Aid signal, page 11

Thatcher's vision of home (authorised version)

By ANDREW PIERCE

SEASONED political observers were astonished by the interview with Mrs Thatcher in this month's *Vanity Fair*. The former prime minister was painted as a shattered figure who missed her old parliamentary routine so badly that she sometimes could not remember what day it was. "Home," she said in what has become the most famous quote of her retirement, "is where you come to when you have nothing better to do."

Or did she say it? Some two weeks after the article appeared, a transcript of the interview has been passed to *The Times*. It puts Mrs Thatcher's remarks in a totally different light and suggests the lady has been victim of a travesty of misquotation.

Far from expressing her own view on the home, Mrs Thatcher was commenting on the fact that when children grow up they move away. "We are a very close family," she said, "even though we do our own thing. That is what family life is

about. This [home] is where you come to with your problems. This is from where you go to, to do what ever you wish. And sometimes if something happens and we don't see the family as often as we would wish, and they go off I say: 'Well, look, home is where you come to when you haven't anything better to do. We are always there.'

Though Mrs Thatcher has not complained publicly about the article, she is said to be deeply hurt by it. "It flew in the face of all she believes in about family life," one of her friends says. "She has always protected her family. This is one of the worst injustices she has suffered in an interview."

The hour-long interview was conducted in the US embassy in Washington by Maureen Orth. She first sought permission for it in January, but was turned down. She tried again, promising a "sympathetic piece" highlighting the fact that, compared with American presidents, Mrs Thatcher was deposed from office with very little financial

support. The Thatcher Foundation was seeking funds in America. Her advisers recommended that the interview should go ahead.

Orth's tape recorder broke down during the interview, but Tory Central Office lent her their back-up recording. Within hours of the article's appearance *Vanity Fair's* public relations company, Belinda Harley Associates, sent the media a three-page press release headed: "Maggie's own crisis in June *Vanity Fair*". Only one sentence was picked out in bold print: "Home is where you come to when you have nothing better to do." Newspaper columnists seized on it with glee.

Orth, who has interviewed George and Barbara Bush, said she had never experienced such a big reaction to an article. "I was surprised by the interpretation. We did not use the quote in full because it was so long. Are people really assuming that was Mrs Thatcher's view on her own home? That's awful. I'm so sorry."

TODAY IN THE TIMES

INTERVIEW

Alan Ayckbourn is the most regularly performed playwright in Britain. Kane Muir interviews the bard of Scarborough Page 12

OPINION

Lloyd's of London could go bust if it does not reform. But, Bernard Levin asks, is that no more than it deserves? Page 14

BUSINESS

Creditors of Asil Nadir's collapsed Polly Peck group meet today to vote on liquidation or reconstruction. Angela Mackay reports Page 23

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MPs challenge bank governor to practise what he preaches

By RICHARD FORD
POLITICAL CORRESPONDENT

THE government yesterday signalled its intention with the 17 per cent pay increase awarded to the governor of the Bank of England as MPs urged Robin Leigh-Pemberton to practise the wage restraint he preaches.

Downing Street refused to comment on the increase, which was made public at an embarrassing time for John Major and senior ministers, who have been pleading for wage restraint. Senior Whitehall sources said the prime minister had been aware of the increase to £155,019 in Mr Leigh-Pemberton's salary for some time but said it was not for him to approve or disapprove of it. The sources said that in the two previous years the governor had rises of only 4 per

cent but they were taken back when told that in 1988 the increase had been 22.9 per cent. As the governor arrived at a Building Societies' Association lunch in Glasgow, he said: "I practise what I preach." His salary, he said, should be judged on the increases over the past three years which average 8 per cent a year.

Mr Leigh-Pemberton's salary includes a notional rent for a flat in London which he can use. His second term as governor ends in 1993 and his pension from the post includes a element of index-linking. A spokesman for the Bank of England refused to give details of the sub-committee of the bank's non-executive directors that undertook a review of salaries.

However, Michael Howard, the employment secretary, made clear

the government's unhappiness at the increase. "Frankly, I do not think it is very sensible to give two annual increases of 4 per cent and then find you have to catch up with a large 17 per cent increase."

Tony Blair, the shadow employment secretary, accused the governor of double standards. "It is a bit difficult to see how this could possibly be approved in the present circumstances. On the one hand people are being told by the prime minister and indeed by the governor himself that they should exercise restraint and on the other hand they do not see the restraint being exercised by those who are making the call for it."

In the City, people pointed to the salary that the governor could command in the private sector and the Bank of England compared his

salary with those being paid to the chairman of the big clearing banks. The National Westminster Bank chairman's salary for 1990 was £321,225, Barclays £404,067, Lloyds £212,819, Midland £295,703, TSB £241,238 and Standard Chartered £260,998.

As the clash over the governor's 17 per cent rise developed, the Labour party criticised businessmen for greedily awarding themselves huge pay increases at a time when it said many workers were taking pay cuts and shareholders' earnings had dropped.

Labour said the big salary increases reflected an insatiable appetite for corporate greed that highlighted a damaging attitude in industry and hampered Britain's long-term development.

While employees and sharehold-

ers suffered from the effects of a recession which has brought rising unemployment and slumping profits, the Opposition said many directors of big companies appeared to be exempt from cuts. "How can organisations such as the Confederation of British Industry have the audacity to demand pay restraint when such outrageous greed is prevalent amongst its members?" Marjorie Mowlem, Labour's spokesman on City and corporate affairs, asks.

In a briefing document prepared to assist Labour MPs in their campaigning on the effects of the government's economic policies, Miss Mowlem has produced the details of pay rises awarded to leading industrialists and contrasted them with the earnings per share and losses suffered by some

of the companies. Her research shows that at Christie's International, where earnings per share dropped by 58.5 per cent between 1989 and 1990, the managing director's salary rose by 19 per cent to £226,000 and the salary of the chairman, Lord Carrington, increased by 13 per cent to £165,000. The salary of Roger Neville, the group chief executive of Sun Alliance Insurance, rose by 12.4 per cent to £259,000 though the firm suffered a loss of £181 million, while Lord Tombs, chairman of Rolls-Royce, had a pay increase of 51 per cent to £180,000 but earnings per share fell by 34 per cent. Rolls-Royce has announced 6,000 job losses.

Leading article, page 15
Business News, page 21

Rolls withdraws dismissal threats

By PHILIP BASSETT
INDUSTRIAL EDITOR

ROLLS-ROYCE, the aero-engine manufacturer, will meet union officials from across the country in Derby today after agreeing to withdraw threats to dismiss all 34,000 employees in order to impose a six-month pay freeze.

The company's action against its own workforce had been widely criticised by lawyers, employee relations managers, Opposition politicians and union leaders.

Leaders of the MSF general technical union, who met Rolls-Royce personnel managers yesterday, said that a number of its members were ready to apply to the High Court today for injunctions restraining the company from taking the action it had outlined, in advance of a full legal suit over the case.

In the face of that, the company and the union agreed yesterday that Rolls-Royce would withdraw the letters, and the union would withdraw legal proceedings. Negotiations will now take place, probably within the next week, on the company's desire for a pay freeze. Tim Webb, MSF national officer, said: "We can now enter into serious negotiations with the company."

Post Office managers said that staff did not support a strike call yesterday over a 7 per cent pay rise. Out of 160 counters affected, 89 had remained open. The Union of Communications Workers has called a four-day national strike by all counter staff next week.

Mark & Spencer, which is not unionised, is to give 10,000 head office and store management staff pay increases of 8 per cent from July. British Rail said it hoped for new productivity improvements after the largest rail union, the RMT, accepted a revised 7.75 per cent pay offer, averting the possibility of strike action.

Ulster search for chairman

British and Irish government officials were yesterday drawing up lists of prominent people to try to find an independent person to chair the second round of talks on the political future of Northern Ireland (Tim Jones writes).

The choice of chairman is another potential minefield in the path of the talks, which have already been delayed by the squabble over the venue.

Naming a chairman is a task, but the first stage of the talks, dealing with administrative structures for Northern Ireland, should start on Tuesday if a chairman's terms of reference can be agreed.

Kohl praise

Helmut Kohl, the German chancellor, said yesterday that John Major was "the best thing that could have happened to Europe". Addressing academics after receiving an honorary doctorate from Edinburgh university, Herr Kohl said that Mr Major had rightly stressed that Britain's natural place was in the heart of Europe. "Without its active participation a united Europe cannot thrive," he said.

Libel advance

Big savings in the costs of certain libel actions will result from a Court of Appeal ruling yesterday allowing judges to decide early in the proceedings if the words complained of are capable of bearing the defamatory meaning alleged. In an action against *New Woman* magazine by Sarah Keys, Lord Justice Neill found that the words complained of were capable of bearing a defamatory meaning.

Rubbish protest

Residents of a housing estate in Tootenham, Liverpool, trapped a refuse lorry in a one-way street with a barricade of cars yesterday, then forced a team of dustmen to clear up piles of rubbish. The residents had dumped the rubbish in protest after claiming that their bins were not being emptied. Police said that a Granada television crew that tried to film the protest had their camera and film taken.

CORRECTION

The Bismarck was incorrectly described as a "pocket" battleship in a feature on May 22 (Life and Times). The error was not made by the author of the article, James Stewart-Moore.

Ban on pit bulls brings confusion and vigilante fear

By BILL FROST AND ROBERT MORGAN

LABOUR yesterday criticised government proposals to ban American pit bull terriers, saying they were unworkable in the absence of a national dog registration scheme. Opposition backbenchers also urged Angela Rumbold, the Home Office minister, to extend ownership prohibition to other dangerous breeds.

Against a background of growing confusion over the precise nature of government plans to deal with fighting dogs, the National Canine Defence League expressed fears yesterday of vigilante action in advance of legisla-

tion. The warning came as police in east London questioned four men after a Staffordshire bull terrier had been clubbed to death.

Tony Power, aged 45, and his girl friend were woken when a gang broke into their home in Leytonstone. Mr Power was struck on the head with a hurrying stick before the gang found the dog and beat it to death.

The National Canine Defence League and the RSPCA repeated calls to Kenneth Baker, the home secretary, to clarify his plans and reconsider the wholesale de-

struction of pit bulls. The League said: "The government must consult properly with the relevant organisations involved with dogs and dog owners to produce a swift, but considered and practical solution rather than exploit a tide of publicity for political ends."

Animal welfare organisations pressed the home secretary to abandon mass slaughter of pit bulls in favour of a neutering programme and the introduction of a registration scheme. But in the Commons, Mrs Rumbold said she could see no case for a register.

In a written reply, Tony Blair, a junior environment minister, said a registration scheme would be "bureaucratic, expensive and difficult to enforce". However, measures would be introduced in April requiring dogs to have collars and name tags.

Roger Mugford, a leading animal psychologist, said yesterday that the owners of pit bull terriers fell into three categories: the criminal psychopath, the social inadequate and the innocent abroad. "The first group use the animal for fighting or as protection while dealing in drugs; the second have the animals to compensate for a lack of machismo; those in the third category simply do not realise what they have got at the end of the lead."

"While most dogs with behaviour problems will respond to treatment, the pit bull is an all but hopeless case. The only advice I can offer owners is to have the dog muzzled at all times, or put it down."

Two men were remanded on bail in Bristol yesterday accused of causing unnecessary suffering to a cat which was said to have died in a street attack by a Staffordshire bull terrier.

In Chesterfield, Derbyshire, a boy, aged four, was admitted to hospital after being attacked by a doberman. Jason Davis had stitches in three scalp wounds and a cut on his forehead.

Hamburg takes lead on licensing

By ALICE THOMSON

HAMBURG yesterday became the first German state to enforce a licensing system for breeding and owning fighting dogs.

In legal terms, possessing a dangerous dog is considered similar to having an offensive weapon. Alcoholics and convicted criminals will not be allowed to keep a dog. Other states are expected to pass similar legislation.

The Japanese Kennel Club says there is no tradition of fighting dogs in Japan. Shibas, a Japanese breed about 15in tall, is the most popular dog and most dogs are pedigreed and registered.

Certain breeds are designated "national treasures" and have strict export licences and controls. The Japanese Tosa, sometimes cross-bred in Britain, weighs an average 80kg and is not considered dangerous in Japan.

Concern over recent attacks has been echoed in Ireland. The government is to order the deaths of all pit bull terriers to co-ordinate with British legislation. There are an estimated 2,000 pit bull terriers in the republic, with some thought to be used for

staged fights. In The Netherlands all dogs must be registered and owners must have third-party insurance, which has higher rates for dogs likely to be aggressive. A policy of neutering fighting breeds has begun.

Pit bull terriers have been banned in parts of Belgium for three years after a spate of attacks in The Netherlands but decisions were left to local authorities. Iceland is the only country that has banned all dogs from cities. The ban proved impossible to enforce, however, and dogs are now allowed on a limited basis.

In the United States each state has different regulations. In New York, where there is the biggest concentration, dogs are allowed in public only on a leash. Last year the health department tried to ban the pit bull after it became popular with drug dealers, and the city prohibited new pit bulls being taken into the city. Those already there had to be sterilized and muzzled, but protests forced the rules to be withdrawn.

In France, any dog sold must be tattooed with a registration number.

Clarke rejects 'tests chaos'

By DAVID TYTLER, EDUCATION EDITOR

KENNETH Clarke, the education secretary, last night rejected claims that children aged seven were left in tears and that classrooms were in chaos as they took the national curriculum tests.

His response came after a survey from the National Union of Teachers reported

that the tests were disrupting teaching and damaging the education of primary pupils.

"The vast majority of parents want their children to be tested, overwhelming numbers of teachers see the need for tests and most children cope well with them," Mr Clarke said. "When it becomes clear that some adjustments are required, I will act."

Anne Moran, president of the NUT and head of Castle-town primary school, Sunderland, said that teaching time was disrupted and that discipline had collapsed in some schools, where the tests had broken the special relationship between young children

and their teachers. Describing a science test to discover the difference between floating and sinking, Mrs Moran said: "You can imagine what happens when you have a baby bath full of water in the middle of the classroom and the teacher is concentrating on the four children who are doing the task and not the other 24."

The questionnaire was completed by 1,226 teachers in 18,000 primary schools. Seventy-five per cent of teachers reported worse classroom behaviour and 95 per cent said that test results taught them nothing about pupils they did not know already.



An RUC officer inspecting the charred remains of the house in Antrim where four children died yesterday morning

Boy dies in fire trying to save family

A BOY died yesterday as he tried unsuccessfully to rescue his younger brother and two sisters trapped in their blazing home in Antrim, Northern Ireland. Neighbours said that Darren Battie, aged 11, could have escaped the flames but instead he tried to reach the screaming children.

His mother, Frances Murphy, had fled seconds earlier after throwing her other daughter, Lisa, aged two, through an upstairs window.

The other children who died were named last night as Leslie Beattie, aged seven, and half-sister Mairead, 18 months, and Francine, seven months. Police said the

blaze, which began in a downstairs living room, started accidentally. Miss Murphy was recovering last night in hospital with her daughter, who broke an arm in the fall.

Kevin Kelly, a neighbour, said that Darren could have survived by jumping. "He was a great lad and took a lot of responsibility for the other children and it was just like him to try to help them in a situation like this," he said. "The heat was tremendous and there was black smoke everywhere. We could hear the children screaming but couldn't get in to help them."



Mairead Murphy, right, who died, and sister Lisa

Row flares on funding of research

By NIGEL HAWKES
SCIENCE EDITOR

AN INCREASINGLY bitter row between universities and the research councils came into the open yesterday when Sir Edward Parkes, chairman of the Committee of Vice-Chancellors and Principals, told Kenneth Clarke, education secretary, in a letter that vice-chancellors opposed the transfer of about £80 million from the budget of the Universities Funding Council to the research councils.

They believe that the transfer, ostensibly intended to clarify the way research is funded, will be used by the research councils to restore finances at the expense of the universities.

The problems emerged because of government attempts to clarify dual funding, in which the UGC and the research councils contribute to university research costs. The idea was to shift research support wholly to the councils, to make the system simpler and more accountable.

Heseltine pins his faith on inner-city cash strategy

By SHEILA GUNN, POLITICAL CORRESPONDENT

MICHAEL Heseltine yesterday challenged the leaders of big city authorities to demonstrate their ability to regenerate run-down areas by competing for £75 million of next year's inner-cities budget.

The environment secretary's *City Challenge* will pit 15 authorities against each other with only ten set to "win" a share of £350 million over five years from the government's existing inner-cities budget. Mr Heseltine insisted he was giving back to local authorities the chance to exercise greater control over the revival of their inner cities. The councils asked to take part in the contest are Barnsley, Birmingham, Bradford, Bristol, Liverpool, Manchester, Middlesbrough, Newcastle upon Tyne, Nottingham, Salford, Sheffield, Wirral, Wolverhampton and the London boroughs of Lewisham and Tower Hamlets. In contrast to some of his predecessors, the environment secretary talked of his faith in the leaders of the mainly Labour-



Heseltine: "Great cities must raise their sights"

ahead to the future."

When Mr Heseltine arrives on Tuesday by helicopter today on the last leg of his regional tour since resigning office as environment minister, he will find that Middlesbrough council has already drawn up a bid for funds under his scheme (Peter Davenport writes).

One council on the list of those invited to submit programmes is Middlesbrough, and yesterday Michael Carr, its leader, said he believed the town to be an ideal candidate for the initiative. Though he expressed reservations that the funding was not new money, he put forward the outer estates of east Middlesbrough as an area worthy of benefiting from the scheme.

The area has a population of 34,000 with unemployment among men averaging 20 per cent, and up to 30 per cent in two council wards; those in work are on low incomes. A recent survey of five multi-story blocks showed 60 per cent of households living on less than £3,000 a year.

Many residents are unskilled, and few take up the chance of re-training; health is poor, with death rates on average 25 per cent higher than national figures, and social services face a heavy caseload with an array of demands. On top of all that, there is a high incidence of burglary, car crime, vandalism and break-ins at businesses.

Mr Carr, who said yesterday the Labour-controlled council would welcome the chance to co-operate with central government on developing a strategy to improve life in the estates, said: "We want *City Challenge* to fit in with the recently announced Safer Cities project and other initiatives. Tackling the root causes of anti-social behaviour by providing employment and social activity, improving health standards and easing social stress will have a major impact."

Bicycles banned from Cambridge city centre

By JOHN SHAW

TRAFFIC planners in Cambridge put a spoke in an ancient tradition yesterday when an experimental ban on bicycles in part of the historic city centre was approved by a county council sub-committee.

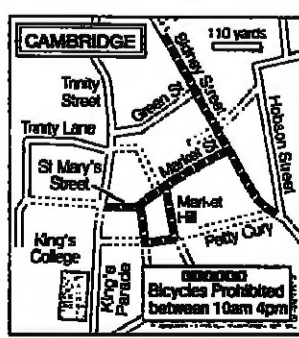
Opponents of the scheme said that banning cycles from Cambridge was like banning horses from Newmarket, but their objections were overruled. The plan needs formal approval by the transport services committee next month, but is likely to come into force next spring.

Bicycles, the traditional form of transport for dons and students alike, will be banned from a central triangle formed by Sidney Street, Market

Street, Market Hill and St Mary's Street. All motor vehicles will be banned from those streets and from St John Street, Trinity Street and Trinity Lane 10am-4pm Monday-Saturday. The aim is to confine to pedestrians much of the city centre to reduce the city's traffic problems.

The scheme has aroused the ire of both dons and students. A letter from six colleges, which was largely ignored by the committee, said that restricting vehicular access to the colleges during the day was very unreasonable and most unusual, hampered academic work, and restricted academic administration. The period of restriction was intolerable, the letter said.

Dr John Bradfield, senior



bursar of Trinity College, who attended the meeting, said: "The colleges are in effect six major 'hotels' servicing several thousand people. This whole thing is very difficult. We cannot move colleges out of the city centre, like businesses can move their premises. Colleges are by their

nature completely anchored to the buildings they occupy."

The scheme follows a massive public consultation exercise held earlier this year. Almost 3,000 people responded and 70 per cent supported the scheme, which is part of a much larger traffic management plan for the city. The traffic management sub-committee which approved the project comprises both county and city councillors.

Tony Carter, chairman of the sub-committee, said afterwards that he was delighted that approval was given to the proposals. "The public has shown quite clearly that it supports the concept of pedestrianisation for the city centre," he said. "We will need to consider in

more detail arrangements for seriously disabled drivers, those living in the city centre and delivery vehicles. I am sure we can resolve these issues and I'll look forward to the scheme being introduced next year."

Before the meeting three petitions with 2,300 signatures opposing the restrictions, from bus users, the students' union and a local Labour party, were handed in.

Duncan Ross, aged 23, a deputy president of the students' union, said Cambridge was one of those places where a lot of people lived in the city centre and he believed the affect of the scheme "will go a long way towards killing the city centre and making it more of a shopping mall."

SILVER DOLLAR
Dedicated to my grandfather Joseph Chester Kime (Kime and Bonbrake, J.C. & E.K., photographers, Akron) A pioneer in color photography, he taught me how to use a camera. He was a high school classmate of John F. Kennedy, a White Knight (whose name was W.J. Kime) and a member of the Phi Kappa Psi fraternity. He died in 1943 (aged 48) after a long illness. He was a very kind and generous man. I will always remember him. Alice Cooper's "Silver Dollar Baby" and watch out for spiders!
Richard Bruce Wright, Jr.
P.O. Box 65, 9 Am, Akron, Ohio, USA

Juno's commander launches space sex-equality dispute

By NICK NUTTALL AND BRUCE CLARK IN MOSCOW

THE Soviet-British Juno space mission was embroiled in controversy last night as it emerged that the flight commander considers Britain's first astronaut unfit for the job because she is a woman.

Anatoli Artsebarsky's opinion about his colleague, Helen Sharman, was disclosed in a magazine interview but he backed up his remarks during a live transmission from the Mir space station. Commander Artsebarsky, aged 35, told the *Moskovsky Komsomol* magazine that flying into space was "not a feminine thing" and added: "With a man, you can get through a big volume of work."

He believed that Timothy Mace, the 35-year-old reserve British astronaut, would have been a more suitable choice.

"It is plain that he is more competent to function on a space flight. The trouble was that they both got excellent marks in their tests, and then he was obliged to step aside."

During a transmission from the space station yesterday, Miss Sharman, aged 27, denied that there was any rift between her and the Soviet crew. "We are getting on very well. There have no arguments so far," she said.

Commander Artsebarsky, however, seemed unrepentant about his potentially disruptive remarks. In the same transmission, he said: "I think it is still rather early to work in space. But I think the time will come when women can work in more comfortable conditions. For a short expedition it is acceptable. I just think it

is hard work, not a woman's work."

Members of the British team criticised the Soviet commander's comments as old-fashioned chauvinism. Air Vice Marshall Peter Howard, the Juno mission's medical adviser, said: "This was a military test pilot speaking. It was rash of him to say it, but many military men are male chauvinists."

Major Mace, said by Commander Artsebarsky to have been annoyed at being passed over in favour of Miss Sharman, supported the decision to send her on the mission. "We were both equal in training. She could do as much in training as I could," he said.

The commander's wife, Natasha Artsebarsky, yesterday described her husband as something of a liberal with a great sense of sexual equality who occasionally did the washing up.

"I am a parachutist. If my husband believed that a woman's place is in the home he would not let me do that," she said.

Commander Artsebarsky's remarks surprise few observers of the Soviet space programme, in which such comments are part of a long tradition. The Soviet Union may have put Valentina Tereshkova as the first woman into space in 1963, but that may have been motivated



Sharman: "Getting on well with Soviet crew"

more by one-upmanship over the Americans than a genuine desire to display sexual equality.

Senior Soviet space officials have, from time to time, publicly and privately displayed a moderation of chauvinism towards women.

Alexei Leonov, head of the cosmonaut training centre, said shortly after Juno was launched that women were "very special creatures who should be on Earth" and that it was the Juno organisers who had insisted that Helen Sharman fly.

Passions of opera spill out of the script

By LIN JENKINS

THE passions of opera amidst the gentility of Glyndebourne escaped the confines of the performance when the on-stage attentions of an American tenor towards Amanda Roocroft, the soprano, proved too much for her boyfriend.

During a dress rehearsal of Trevor Nunn's production of *Così fan tutte* ("All women are like that"), at a party for the cast's guests and the catering contractors, David Ellis, a singer in the chorus, watched with increasing apprehension as Kurt Streit, who plays the lecherous Ferrando, sang opposite Miss Roocroft, playing Fiordiligi.

The couple gazed into each other's eyes before the lingering kiss called for in the script, which, in Mr Ellis's view, appeared longer and more passionate than the director ever intended. Once off stage, he made his feelings clear and thumped Mr Streit in the face, knocking him to the ground.

The tenor was taken to the out-patients' department of the Royal Sussex County hospital in Brighton, where two stitches were put in a cut near his eye.

Events after the party last Friday were hushed with the intrigue and jealousy more normally found in the plot than backstage, as Mr Ellis was removed from the chorus and transferred to the chorus of Nunn's other Glyndebourne production, *Idomeneo*.

A spokesman for Glyndebourne said that tempers had now cooled and that the stitches had been removed before today's opening night. "David has now apologised, and that apology has been accepted. It has all blown over very quickly. It was just a little tiff in the family."

Miss Roocroft, from Coppull, near Wigan, Lancashire, who has been going out with Mr Streit for three years, during which she has been noted as one of opera's rising stars, is



Star-crossed: Amanda Roocroft and Kurt Streit in rehearsal for *Così fan tutte*

said to have been unaffected by the incident.

The removal of Mr Ellis from the chorus was, according to the spokesman, "done simply to ease tensions and to take the tension off before the

opening. Amanda is fine; she is an extremely stable girl, and is shaping up to her big night tomorrow."

Trevor Nunn refused to comment on the incident, and Sir George Christie, chairman

of Glyndebourne, said: "I would rather not comment on this kind of fracas."

"I don't like to talk about people getting hurt," he said. "But I will say that Kurt is a bloody good Ferrando."

Phone complaints increase by fifth

By PETER VICTOR

IN SPITE of British Telecom's £3 billion profit and reported improvements in service to its customers, 38,530 complaints and enquiries about telecom services were made to OfTel, the telephone watchdog body, last year.

BT's annual report yesterday announced significant improvements in financial performance. Pre-tax profits increased by 14.2 per cent on the previous year. OfTel's annual report, also published yesterday, said, however, that more than half the complaints - 16,147 - were disputed telephone accounts. Charges, rental and other billing matters accounted for another 5,178 complaints.

Complaints last year rose by 6,886, a fifth, on 1989's total

of 31,644. BT, however, in publishing yesterday its *Quality of Service Report* for October 1990 to March 1991, said that it had improved its quality of service. The average user now enjoys five years of fault-free service, the report said, only one in 200 calls fails to get through due to faults or congestion, and 83 per cent of home installations are completed in eight days.

Sir Bryan Carberg, the OfTel director-general, said yesterday that, although BT provided a good service, such as with itemised bills, quality of service statistics and funding for voice/text services for the deaf, he was not happy with its handling of complaints. "I have been concerned that customers find it difficult to know how to complain, that complaints are not handled efficiently and that some of BT's staff find it difficult to see the customer's point of view," he said.

The phasing-out, last year, of cheap-rate calls on certain holidays without customers being told appeared "hardly consistent with the concepts of fair dealing", Sir Bryan said. Complaints about 0898 charges by customers who denied making the calls arose from unauthorised use in some cases, but in a number, Sir Bryan said, thorough investigations were needed, in some cases looking into the security of BT's billing system and of its network.

Sun pays libel cash to boy, 6

JONATHAN Hunt, aged six, who was branded the "worst brat in Britain" by *The Sun*, won £35,000 libel damages in the High Court yesterday to make legal history as the United Kingdom's youngest libel winner.

He shares the award with his mother Josephine, aged 36, who said after the case that her marriage had broken up because of her fight for compensation for Jonathan.

In July 1989 the newspaper reported: "Terror too Jonathan Hunt was last night dubbed Britain's nastiest kid, after wrecking his parent's home, cutting off his own ear and killing the cat".

Geoffrey Shaw, for the boy, said the article described various incidents of alleged gross misbehaviour by Jonathan, who was five years old at the time.

It was an exaggeration, because he did not kill the cat and did not cut off his own ear. The cat died of leukaemia and Jonathan severed the lobe of his ear when he fell against a coffee table.

But the editor and staff of *The Sun* were aware at the time that he was registered disabled and had contracted acute neuro-meningitis at birth, which caused behavioural problems. That was not mentioned in the article.

James Price, for News Group Newspapers, publishers of *The Sun*, said that if its editor had known of Jonathan's disability before publication the article would not have appeared. They expressed their "most sincere regret for the distress caused".

An apology had appeared six days after the original article.

They denied libel and considered the settlement was a generous one.

Nuclear-free policy ridiculed by Tebbit

By MICHAEL HORNSBY

NORMAN Tebbit yesterday painted an imaginary picture of Russian generals calling for a list of nuclear-free zones in Britain to make sure that their SS20 missiles avoided them during a nuclear war against the West.

The former Conservative Party chairman was giving evidence at the High Court on the third day of a libel action in which he is accused of slandering a Labour council leader whom he blamed for having wasted £50,000 of ratepayers' money on a "damned fool" anti-nuclear policy.

The money was allegedly spent on the orders of David Bookbinder, leader of Derbyshire county council, on overprinting nearly four million envelopes with the slogan: "Derbyshire County Council is a nuclear-free zone."

The court broke into laughter as Mr Tebbit, aged 60, ridiculed the policy and declined to withdraw the remarks he had made during a by-election campaign in Derbyshire West in May 1986.

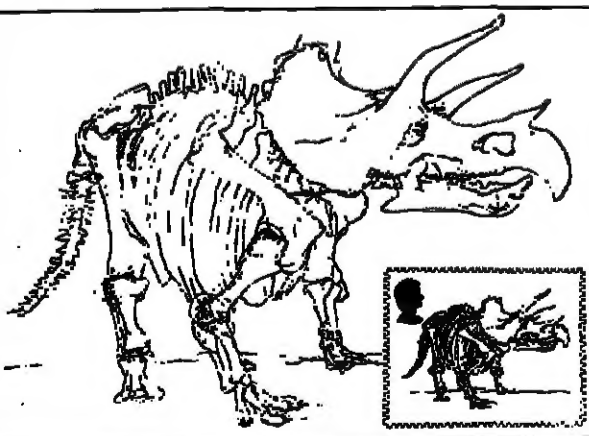
Later a former senior

printer with the council told the jury that the total cost of printing the slogan must have been more than £70,000. Terence Shaw, aged 54, said that the envelopes took months to overprint and that six out of seven machines in the print shop were constantly used.

The case continues today.

Dinosaurs to return through letterbox

By SIMON TAIT, ARTS CORRESPONDENT



AN IMAGE (left) by Bryan Kneale, professor of drawing at the Royal College of Art, of triceratops and our impression of how it may appear on a stamp for the 150th anniversary of the coining of the term "dinosaur".

It was in 1841 that the dinosaur first roamed the English language, when Sir Richard Owen, founder of the Natural History Museum, coined the word, meaning "terrible lizard", to the eternal gratitude

of children, who had had to grapple with stegosaurus, protoceratops and iguanodon.

Skeletal images of those three, plus triceratops and tyrannosaurus, drawn by Professor Kneale are to appear on a set of stamps, at 22p, 26p, 31p, 33p and 36p, in August. Designs will be unveiled on June 5 after the Queen's approval. The Natural History Museum will show the drawings, and others considered, from June 6 to August 31.

NHS rejects waiting list funds call

By JILL SHERMAN
SOCIAL SERVICES
CORRESPONDENT

DUNCAN Nichol, chief executive of the national health service, yesterday rejected demands by the Commons health select committee for extra funds to cut hospital waiting lists and to adopt a different approach to the problem.

In a report published yesterday the committee said that waiting lists should be a priority and claimed that the £119 million injected into the health service since 1987 to cut lists "could have been better spent".

Latest figures show that 745,000 people are on waiting lists, of whom 172,000 have had to wait for more than a year. "The human misery and financial cost of long waiting lists are impossible to quantify," the report said, offering 20 recommendations to cut lists further. It

	Sept 87	Sept 88	Sept 89	Sept 90
Northern	2,525	2,587	2,593	1,980
Yorkshire	4,022	4,221	3,378	2,732
Trent	5,856	5,919	5,834	5,164
East Anglian	4,004	4,180	4,202	3,036
North West Thames	4,389	7,149	5,723	4,732
North East Thames	12,261	14,422	13,096	10,007
South East Thames	8,135	8,081	9,285	7,829
South West Thames	4,529	5,142	5,385	4,242
Wessex	3,658	4,568	4,145	3,370
Oxford	3,634	3,997	3,542	3,132
South Western	5,082	4,772	4,608	4,476
West Midlands	11,585	9,075	8,495	5,942
Mersey	2,329	1,573	498	48
North Western	5,908	6,004	6,196	5,474
SHAs	199	373	474	815
England	79,128	80,075	75,613	60,957

Source: Commons Health Committee, "Special Health Authorities"

suggested that extra money should go towards rewarding health authorities who kept lists down and to those with the worst problems.

The report said that an independent team from Birmingham university's health services management centre, headed by John Yates, had cut

the worst lists by up to 40 per cent, often by improving inefficient management.

Mr Yates resigned from the project earlier this year after disagreeing with government ministers over the best way to tackle lists. He criticised the government's plan to penalise health authorities which failed

to reach unrealistic targets, claiming that it would encourage districts to remove patients who were waiting for low priority operations.

The committee, however, has backed Mr Yates. It said in its report that the commitment to treat any patient should be honoured by the NHS. It suggested that the NHS should consider whether some operations, like tattoo removal, should be offered.

Mr Nichol said yesterday he was not persuaded by the need for more funds. "We have invested £35 million in this year's waiting lists fund, matched by £25.5 million of the region's own money. The NHS management executive is agreeing tough targets with each of the 14 regional health authorities, which will result in a further major reduction in the number of long-wait patients."

He admitted, however, that health authorities could learn from the approach adopted by Mr Yates's team.

William Waldegrave, the health secretary, said that latest provisional figures showed a 19 per cent reduction in 1990/91 in the number of patients waiting more than 12 months, and 38 per cent in the number waiting two years or more. "This is a quite unprecedented drop. We shall continue to keep up the good work," he said.

Monthly cycle link to breast surgery success

By NIGEL HAWKES
SCIENCE EDITOR

UP TO 600 women's lives could be saved in Britain every year if breast cancer surgery were always carried out in the second half of the menstrual cycle, research at Guy's hospital suggests.

Doctors studying the outcome of breast cancer surgery on 249 women treated at Guy's between 1975 and 1985 were surprised to discover that the timing of the operation turned out to be among the most important factors for long-term survival.

Women operated on between days three and twelve of their cycle had a 54 per cent chance of surviving for at least the next ten years, while those who had their operations at other times had an 84 per cent chance.

The odds against that arising by chance are very long. If the same effect proves to be true of all the pre-menopausal women with early breast cancer in Britain (about 6,000 a year) 600 lives might be saved every year.

Ian Fentiman, deputy director of the Imperial Cancer Research Fund's breast unit at Guy's, said yesterday: "This finding is potentially very important. Although we are not saying that all hospitals should adopt our policy, we suggest that they look carefully at their own results, to see if they show the same effect."

Michael Richards, a consultant in the same unit and another of the authors of the study, which appears in today's issue of *The Lancet*, said: "We have started other studies to try to establish the scientific basis for them."

The mechanism underlying the effect is assumed to have something to do with the release of different hormones at different stages of the menstrual cycle.

Admissions to the intensive care unit of the John Radcliffe hospital at Oxford are being restricted because five patients have been affected by an infection particularly resistant to antibiotics.

Strokes halved, page 7

Pupils expelled

A boy and two girls were expelled from Marlborough college in Wiltshire yesterday after being arrested in a drug squad raid requested by their headmaster, David Cope. Police questioned the pupils after 25 officers with sniffer dogs found four caches of cannabis resin during a search of boarders' rooms. The three were cautioned and released.

DPP case fails

An attempt by the Director of Public Prosecutions to quash a magistrate's decision to substitute new charges for ones under which Desmond Ellis, an IRA suspect, was extradited from the Irish Republic failed in the High Court yesterday. Lord Justice Glidewell, sitting with Mr Justice Hodgson, said the application for judicial review was "not the appropriate procedure" and that the trial, at the Old Bailey on October 6, should go ahead.

Stalker award

Shoot to Kill, a television drama-documentary about the John Stalker enquiry into Northern Ireland killings criticised by politicians as terrorist propaganda, has been named as best single drama by the Royal Television Society. The programme's makers, Zenith Productions, also won the best drama series award for *Inspector Morse*. BBC television's *Oranges Are Not the Only Fruit* was voted best drama serial. The awards were presented in London last night.

Import ban on pigs sought as disease strikes two farms

By MICHAEL HORNSBY
AGRICULTURE CORRESPONDENT

GOVERNMENT veterinary officials are investigating what they fear may be the first outbreak in Britain of an infectious pig disease that has spread across northern Europe in recent months, killing more than 4,000 animals. Two pig farms on Humberside have been served with restriction orders prohibiting movement of animals to or from their premises.

Pig industry spokesmen said that until more was known about the disease the agriculture ministry should ban imports of all live pigs, consider a ban on fresh or lightly-cured pork coming from infected countries and tighten hygiene con-

trols on vehicles visiting the Continent that might act as carriers.

The condition, called mystery reproductive syndrome or more popularly "blue ear disease", was first detected in Germany towards the end of last year and has spread to The Netherlands and Belgium. Affected sows go off their food, develop influenza-like symptoms and abort. Piglets are born dead or die before they are weaned. Ears and other extremities may show a bluish tinge, and the mortality rate among piglets can be as high as 40 per cent. After a few weeks pigs in an infected herd usually become immune to further outbreaks.

There is so far no clue to what causes the syndrome or how it

spreads. The symptoms resemble those of a similarly mysterious condition that has affected American pig herds for about four years. Some experts think the disease may spread in moisture droplets in the air and is probably caused by a virus.

Keith Meldrum, the chief veterinary officer, said yesterday there was a distinct possibility that the illness of the Humberside pigs was the same as that found on mainland Europe.

"There is no diagnostic test," he said. "All we can do is look at all other possible causes of this condition and eliminate them one by one. If, after two or three weeks of detailed investigation, we find no

other cause, then we might conclude that the condition is similar, if not identical, to that found in Europe."

Grenville Welsh, chief executive of the British Pig Association, said: "Until the government can give us a categorical assurance that the infection cannot be carried in fresh or lightly-cured pork, which they cannot do at the moment, imports of these products should be banned. After all, we have had to accept restrictions on our exports of beef because of BSE [bovine spongiform encephalopathy]."

Mr Welsh said there was concern that even though Britain did not import live pigs from Germany, The Netherlands or Belgium, infection might be channelled indirectly

through Denmark, which has a land border with Germany and exports pigs to this country.

"We are also pressing the government to tighten controls on vehicles transporting livestock to the infected areas. There is a danger that the infection could be brought back on the lorries or the clothes of the drivers," he said.

Mr Meldrum said there was no evidence of any kind that MRS could be carried in pigmeat or pose a risk to humans who ate it, and the government had no plans to restrict imports. The ministry last night declined to identify the two farms. They are understood to have 200 sows each, reared in intensive indoor conditions.



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Water firm agrees to pay £100,000 for effluent leak

By PETER VICTOR

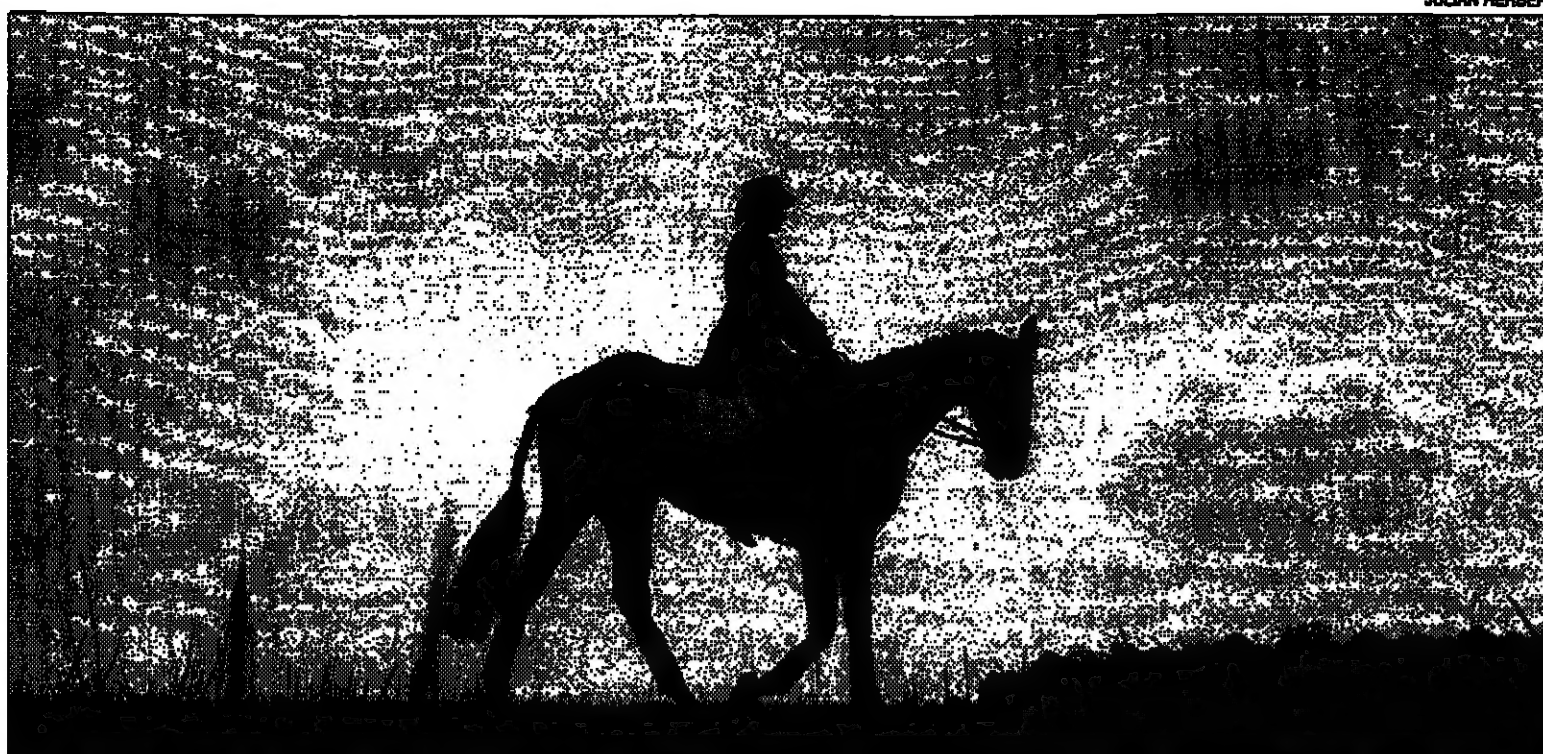
THAMES Water Utilities was fined £1,000 yesterday and agreed to pay £100,000 compensation after it admitted, during a prosecution brought by the National Rivers Authority, having polluted a two-mile stretch of the river Kennet on the Wiltshire-Berkshire border.

Thames Water was also fined £1,000 with £225 costs after it admitted that a sewage treatment works pump spilled diesel oil into the upper reaches of the river, a trout fishing spot.

The leak, said to have been caused by an employee's mistake, killed hundreds of trout, damaged wildlife and led to an operation by volunteers to rescue oil-covered ducks and swans from a stretch of the river upstream of Ramsbury Manor estate, near Marlborough, owned by Harry Hyams, a property developer. The company pleaded

guilty at Marlborough magistrates' court to discharging trade effluent into controlled water last year. Thames Water undertook to pay £5,000 to £7,000 to the authority for the clean-up, and agreed to pay a further £100,000 in compensation to third parties affected by the leak, including Gale and Ainsley's Church Trout Farm. Susan Tysoe, for the prosecution, said that on the morning of November 13 the sewage treatment works in Elcot Lane, Marlborough, received reports of a strong smell of oil and a red film on the Kennet. "Five thousand litres of oil was lost from the tank," she said. More than 350 fish died at the trout farm.

Peter Taylor, for Thames Water, said that the operator either did not press a switch or pressed it ineffectually and oil from the tank continued to flow over the top.



Sky rider: Danielle Brown, of Blandford, Dorset, on Helwell Triumph preparing yesterday for the first day of the annual Windsor horse trials

Industry takes up business with the greens

By CRAIG SETON

BIG business was as much in evidence at the Green Show yesterday as dedicated conservationists and groups.

The green movement has progressed so fast that Rover and Saab cars, Tesco, British Coal, Opencast, Dunlop, Powergen and British Nuclear Fuels all took large stands at the show, proclaiming their

contribution to the environment, alongside bodies concerned with saving whales and dolphins, the promotion of breastfeeding, meditation and vegetarianism and the case against vivisection.

When the first national Green Show was held at the National Exhibition Centre (NEC), Birmingham, last year, anti-nuclear demonstrators

dumped what they said was contaminated sludge on the British Nuclear Fuels (BNFL) stand as a protest at its presence.

At the NEC yesterday, BNFL said there was a much more congenial mood and no signs of hostility. However, the organisers said that as many as 40 "green" companies that took part in last

year's show had refused to come back because the nuclear company had a stand this year.

One of the largest of the 230 exhibitors at the five-day show is Rover cars, keen to explain its "whole life" approach to the environment through cars equipped with catalytic converters, and new engines made with large quantities

of recycled aluminium.

Tim Andrews, a volunteer on a stand occupied by Green Line magazine, an ecology publication started in 1982, said that without the presence of large companies, the Green Show would probably be only a fringe affair for dedicated environmentalists. He said: "If the public come here thinking it is a truly green show, they will be disappointed. There are small green fairs held in town halls all the time. That is where the real green people are."

The show is organised by Green Shows and Conferences, a Birmingham-based company.

Gulf war affects holiday bookings

The Gulf war has changed British holiday patterns and cut the tourist income of eastern Mediterranean countries (Harvey Elliott writes).

Bookings to Turkey, Morocco and Yugoslavia are half what they were last year, while Tunisia, Cyprus and Italy are down by a quarter, according to figures compiled by 18 tour operators. Portugal, on the Atlantic coast, has a quarter more bookings.

Overall, tour operators expect to sell 7 per cent fewer package holidays this year.

GP's fortune

Winifred Perry, aged 89, of Downs Park West, who died in February, has left the bulk of her fortune of £1,508,250 to her GP, Dr Sadrudin Makin. He said he had been looking after her for 20 years, cooking and shopping for her.

Girl threatened

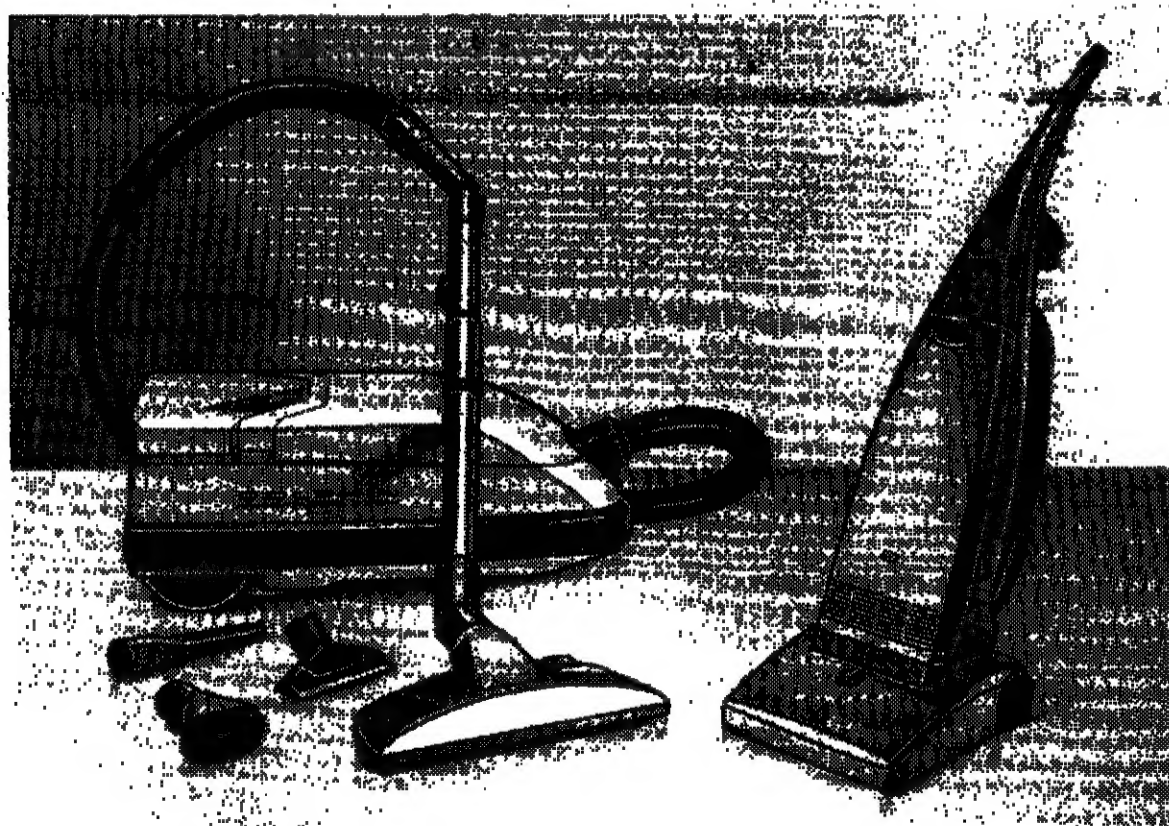
Armed raiders poured petrol over the bed of a jeweller's 12-year-old daughter and threatened to light it to try to force him to hand over the keys to his shop in Aston, Birmingham. But the man fled after the jeweller tricked them by saying he had to get the keys from his father's house and then slammed the door on them.

Opening time

Orders banning the B&Q do-it-yourself stores from Sunday trading in Canterbury, Watford and Havering, London, were lifted yesterday.

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Cylinder/1000 watts/Built-in tool storage
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ELECTROLUX 2230 Dolphin (illustrated)..... 109.99
Cylinder/1400-1100 watts variable power/
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Free Turbo Head

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10 Months Interest Free Credit*
ELECTROLUX 1410 Contour (illustrated)..... 114.99
Upright/600 watts/
5.5 litre reusable dust bag/Built-in tools
Price includes £10 Trade-in (Normally £124.99)
ELECTROLUX 1450 Contour..... 124.99
Upright/600 watts plus boost to 800 watts/
Built-in tools/5.5 litre reusable dust bag
Price includes £10 Trade-in (Normally £134.99)
10 Months Interest Free Credit*

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£211m hi-tech ship has no buyer, role or apparent future

By MICHAEL EVANS, DEFENCE CORRESPONDENT

HMS Challenger, one of the Royal Navy's most expensive ships, which came into service in 1984 at a cost of about £211 million, is tied up in Portsmouth with no crew, no role and no apparent future.

The 7,200-tonne seabed operations vessel, equipped with the latest underwater "sensor" systems, has been waiting for a buyer since the defence ministry decided to sell her as part of its efforts to save £500 million from last year's budget.

Tied up in Portsmouth for the last four months, the ship is threatening to become an embarrassing reminder of an era of less stringent budget controls. The ship should have a complement of about 180 but navy sources said that there was now just a skeleton crew on board.

The Challenger has been used twice only since 1984, to recover toxic chemicals from the MV Festini off Guernsey and to salvage a Harrier jet lost from HMS Ark Royal in Lyme Bay.

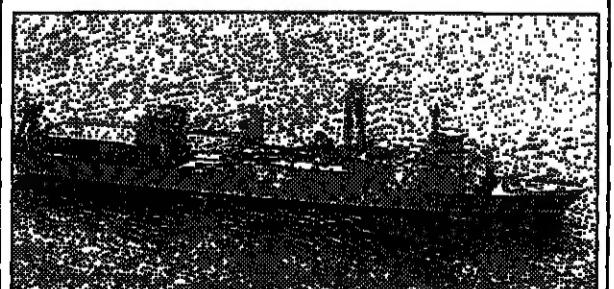
The ministry's failure to sell the vessel is the latest in a series of blows for the Challenger, which was hailed as the world's most advanced diving ship when she came into service. She was ordered in September

1979, launched in May 1981 and should have joined the fleet in 1983. Just before the vessel was due to be completed, faulty wiring was discovered throughout the ship, contributing to a 20-month delay.

Two years later, the ship's deep-diving system had to be replaced in a multi-million pound, ten-month effort after it was claimed that the specialist diving equipment was up to 10 years out of date when the vessel was completed. The defence ministry conceded in 1986 that the ship's original price of £71 million would rise sharply because of the improvements needed. The vessel is now regarded by some as a disastrous example of defence procurement.

The Challenger is equipped to help to rescue a crippled submarine on the seabed, being able to hold an exact position, even in heavy seas. Since being tied up in Portsmouth, however, she has not been kept in running order and would be unable to launch an emergency rescue should a submarine accident occur.

Some navy sources believe that the Challenger could be used for oceanographic research, but as yet no research institution has shown interest.



HMS Challenger, facing an uncertain future

MPs criticise delays in defence deliveries

By OUR DEFENCE CORRESPONDENT

SEVERAL large defence procurement programmes, already over schedule, have been hit by further delays, according to a report from the Commons defence committee published yesterday. A light anti-tank weapon, LAW 80, entered service in 1988, five years late. But modifications needed after difficulties during training have delayed deliveries a further seven months.

The Tucano training aircraft programme for the RAF is also behind schedule. At the end of December Shorts, the Belfast company sold to Bombardier of Canada two years ago, had delivered only 51 aircraft instead of 114.

MPs also reported new delays in the command sys-

tem for the Royal Navy's Type 23 frigate, of which the first five are now expected to be handed over without an automatic command and control system.

Sir David Plastow, chairman of Vickers Defence Systems, which is competing to supply tanks to replace the army's Chieftains, has written to the prime minister appealing for a decision.

He feels the government has no reason to delay, since all documents have been available for some time. Papers detailing recommendations have yet to be passed to relevant ministers.

Further Examination of Defence Procurement Projects (Commons defence committee, Stationery Office, £8.90)

JP 11/25/50



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The concept of 'active safety' (the ability to avoid an accident) is fundamental to the thinking behind the new Audi 100.

ABS Hence ABS braking, front-wheel drive (to pull you out of trouble rather than push you into it) or the option of quattro four-wheel drive.

Acceleration and handling are obviously an important part of this philosophy so it was pleasing to hear the respected magazine 'Auto Motor und Sport' say that 'the Audi actually lets itself be driven nimbly and precisely like a small car. At the same time, it demonstrates excellent road holding and therefore ensures completely relaxed and unequalled driving'.

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The new, strengthened side panels and the Procon-Ten safety system were described by 'Autozeitung' as giving the Audi 100 2.3E 'the advantage in safety terms' over the BMW 520i and the Mercedes 230E.

But it doesn't say in any manual (and certainly not in the Audi handbook) that a safe car has to be a boring car.

'Auto Motor und Sport' described driving the 2.8E between 2,000 and 4,000 revs as a 'genuine pleasure' compared to the BMW 525i and the Mercedes 260E.

Concluding that the Audi 'surpassed the competitors in terms of responsiveness and performance characteristics'.

The respective overall conclusions of these respected gentlemen therefore came as little surprise.

'Auto Motor und Sport' placed the Audi 100 2.8E top in 4 out of 5 categories tested against the BMW 525i and the Mercedes 260E, saying that 'Audi has succeeded with its new 6-cylinder engine is not just drawing level with the competition but moving ahead of it'.

The Test Director of 'Autobild' summed up by saying that the new Audi 100 was, in his opinion, 'a real alternative to the BMW and Mercedes'.

While 'Autozeitung' simply stated that the Audi 100 2.3E 'in comparability tests takes first place' over the BMW 520i and the Mercedes 230E.

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Operation halves strokes among high-risk patients

By NIGEL HAWKES, SCIENCE EDITOR

THE largest trial of a surgical technique ever carried out has shown that an operation to relieve narrowing of arteries in the neck can halve the risk of fatal or disabling strokes in high-risk patients.

The ten-year study involving 14 European countries has shown that the operation, costing £2,000, can avoid five major and five less serious strokes for every 100 high-risk patients treated. In patients where the chances of a stroke are low, however, the risks of the operation are greater than those of having a stroke, so it is not justified.

About 100,000 people a year in Britain have a stroke, making it the third most common cause of death and the most common cause of disability. Patients who survive strokes often lose the ability to move one side of their body and frequently suffer speech problems. Even after apparent recovery, there is an increased risk of another stroke within a few years.

About 80 per cent of strokes are caused by blood clots blocking the arteries supplying blood to the brain, and the commonest point of blockage is in the carotid artery running up the neck behind the angle of the jaw.

The blockage can be cleared by a procedure known as carotid endarterectomy, but it is a risky operation. In Britain, about one in 20 of the operations actually causes fatal or disabling strokes. As a result, it has never been clear whether the benefits of the operation outweighed its risks.

Many more such operations have been carried out in the US — 100,000 a year against only 1,500 in Britain — but whether the procedure was really justified had not been established.

With support from the Medical Research Council, the European Carotid Surgery Trial was launched in 1981. The results, published today in *The Lancet*, show that the surgery is justified, but only in

patients known to be at high risk of stroke.

Charles Warlow, professor of medical neurology at the University of Edinburgh and chairman of the group responsible for the study, says: "About 10,000 Britons present each year with a minor stroke-like event and severe neck artery narrowing. The results of this study show that routine surgery on these people could prevent about 500 fatal or disabling strokes, plus another 500 non-disabling strokes."

Trials of surgical procedures are unusual, because there is no obvious source of finance. Drug trials are generally financed by the pharmaceutical companies, who have an interest in their outcome, but finding the money to finance a surgery trial is more difficult. Without the support of the MRC, the stroke trial could not have been conducted.

Fourteen countries were involved in the trial, and 80 different medical centres collaborated. Each of the 2,500 patients was either sent for immediate surgery, or for alternative treatments including aspirin to reduce the danger of clotting, anti-hypertensive drugs, and advice to stop smoking and take more exercise. The progress of each patient was then followed, and results compared.

The surgical procedure, which involves widening the arteries in the neck and allowing the blood to flow more freely, was shown to be a clear benefit only to patients classified as being at high risk of a stroke, where the arteries were narrowed by more than 70 per cent. In the least serious cases, where narrowing was less than 30 per cent, the risk of the operation was greater than that of having a stroke, and for the intermediate group the value of surgery remains equivocal. For this reason, the trial is continuing to recruit patients to try to establish more clearly the balance between risks and benefits.

One in two Welsh people dies of heart disease, an illness that affects 112,000 people in the principality and kills 16,000 every year.

A new prevention strategy outlined by the Welsh Office yesterday aims at reducing that total by a third by the year 2002. The £160 million-a-year programme will focus on prevention and cure, promoting healthier lifestyles, and thoroughly assessing patients believed to be at risk.



Thames discovery: Julian Ayre, a Museum of London archaeologist, studying the Dark Ages skeleton

Thames body has signs of surgery

By NORMAN HAMMOND
ARCHAEOLOGY
CORRESPONDENT

THE mysterious Dark Age burial found by archaeologists on Wednesday on the ancient Thames foreshore has yielded a fresh surprise. Pathological scrutiny of the body has disclosed a circular hole cut in the side of the skull, apparently as surgery.

The technique, known as trepanning, is believed to have been used to treat epilepsy, migraine and other severe headaches, or to cure madness and possession by evil spirits, physical symptoms and the supposed psychological affliction may well have occurred together.

Trepanation was one of the most successful operations in the ancient world. Over a thousand trepanned skulls are known, and more than half exhibit healed bone, showing that the patient had survived surgery for at least several months.

Sometimes, trepanation has been incorrectly diagnosed. A skull bearing double holes that was exhibited at the Brighton Museum was found on examination to represent a medical condition, biparietal thinning.

Scrutiny of the new discovery, made at Bull Wharf, near Southwark Bridge, has not yet indicated whether trepanation was successful, or whether it led to the death of the individual, identified as adult. Study of the hole, which may have been made by drilling, by cutting with a blade or by scraping away bone, will show whether healing had begun. The body was sandwiched between layers of bark.

Toll plan for city's private-sector road

By MICHAEL DYNES, TRANSPORT CORRESPONDENT

DRIVERS using the proposed western orbital motorway around Birmingham face paying tolls for much of their journey after a decision yesterday by Malcolm Rifkind, transport secretary, to transfer control from the public to the private sector.

The decision will create the first toll road in Britain since the demise of the turnpikes in the 19th century.

The western orbital route will run from the M5 near Kidderminster to the M54 north of Wolverhampton, where it will link with the Birmingham northern relief road between the M6 and the M42, which is also to be built by the private sector.

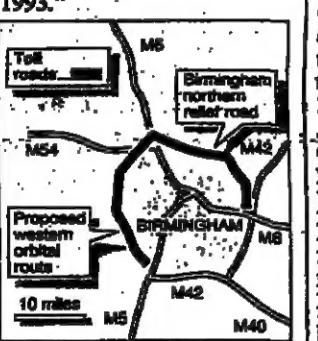
Mr Rifkind said that his decision followed a positive response from the private sector companies wishing to build the road. It is understood, however, that the private sector had been lobbying for the scheme to be transferred out of the public sector road building programme to improve the viability of the northern relief road.

Companies interested in building the western orbital route will soon be asked to

submit pre-qualifying bids. Both projects were originally part of the £17 billion public sector road building programme, and the decision to transfer the schemes to the private sector is part of the government's commitment to recruit private-sector capital to help to provide new transport infrastructure, as outlined in its 1989 green paper.

Richard Diment, deputy director of the British Roads Federation, said that although he welcomed the private sector initiative it had failed to speed the planning process.

"Work should have begun on the Birmingham project in 1991," he said. "Now it looks like work will not begin until 1993."



New chief constable qualified as barrister

By QUENTIN COWDRY, HOME AFFAIRS CORRESPONDENT

DAVID Williams, assistant chief constable of Surrey, was yesterday appointed chief constable of the force in succession to Brian Hayes, who has joined the Inspectorate of Constabulary.

Mr Williams, aged 50, a respected if little-known policeman, has distinguished himself in senior staff and operational posts. He became a contender for a chief constable's post when, in 1984, after serving 26 years in the Metropolitan police, he moved to Hertfordshire as

assistant chief constable. The key breakthrough in his career, however, had come in 1972, when he was awarded a police scholarship to read law at University College London. He graduated in 1977 and was later called to the Bar.

Mr Williams, who is noted for being a good communicator in spite of an unassuming manner, said yesterday that police and public needed to form a partnership to tackle crime. "The rise in crime needs constant attention," he said.

No room for 'also-rans' at top, police watchdog says

By STEWART TENDLER, CRIME CORRESPONDENT

SIR John Woodcock, chief inspector of constabulary, yesterday issued a warning to senior police commanders that there can be no room for "also-rans" at the top of the police service. Policing was too important to be left in any but capable hands.

Sir John, in his report for 1990, told chief constables and other top ranks: "Make no mistake, those forces with open-minded, intelligent, fair, down-to-earth leaders who are prepared to learn from mis-

takes and positively encourage criticism will succeed; the others sadly will not."

Sir John said the government had to provide adequate funding for modern technology. "Any arbitrary cost-cutting here will be the falsest of economies."

Reviewing the past year Sir John recognised there was a "demonstrable if slight decline in confidence across all sections of the community, most disconcertingly among those who have had direct contact with the police." The crime survey showed 60 per cent of the population has contact with the police each year and dissatisfaction came from a lack of police effort, the inability of officers to solve problems or answer questions, and a lack of courtesy.

Sir John said the paradox was that while the police were becoming more effective, police esteem, although still high, appeared to have slipped. All officers had to work harder to improve courtesy, fairness and care.

Sir John supported the growing number of chief constables casting doubt on recorded crime figures as a measure of police effectiveness. He said crime was affected by many factors. Arrests and crimes

cleared up by the investigation work of officers were a far more significant test of the police battle against lawlessness. The rise in crime had stretched the police but in the first nine months of last year the number of detections made through investigations rose by 17 per cent.

He said fear was fuelled by the number of recorded offences, which reached 4.5 million last year, but most offences were crimes against property and not violent offences. Sir John emphasised the need for the police to show more care towards victims. He said changes in the police national computer system must include the ability for forces to exchange information.

The future of policing should be debated by a royal commission and not left to divisive party politics, Michael Bennett, chairman of the Metropolitan Police branch of the Police Federation, told its annual conference in Eastbourne yesterday. The conference voted overwhelmingly to initiate a campaign to establish a fresh royal commission on the police.

Report of Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Constabulary for 1990 (Stationery Office, £11.20)

Recession puts end to 157-year tradition of gunmaking

By CRAIG SETON

THE recession has put paid to W & C Scott, one of the best-known names in British gunmaking, whose hand-crafted, double-barrelled shotguns have been used by members of the aristocracy and other sportsmen for more than a century and a half to bring down pheasant in fields and grouse on moors.

The Birmingham company was formed by the brothers William and Charles Scott in the city's once-booming gunsmiths' quarter 157 years ago and became a pillar of the industry, supplying shotguns made to order and parts for some of the

most famous names in gunmaking. The firm was bought six years ago by Holland and Holland, another prominent British gunmaker, which has found the recession cutting deep into what is still regarded as a luxury trade in hand-crafted, engraved shotguns costing up to £17,000. Orders for new guns from W & C Scott have fallen sharply and as a result it will close in September.

The Birmingham company always spurned mass production in favour of the hand-made product, even when competition intensified as much cheaper, machine-made imports began flooding into the country. Production of a standard

W & C Scott double-barrelled shotgun, costing about £4,500, takes at least 300 man hours to complete.

The firm's closure will mean the loss of 26 jobs in the Witton area of Birmingham, most of them of craftsmen, although there are hopes that the company's business in repairs, servicing and spare parts will survive in some form.

The company was amalgamated with the gunmaker Webley in 1896 to make shotguns, handguns and air weapons and remained in Birmingham's gun quarter until after the second world war. Eleven years ago, the two went their separate ways when the shotgun side of the busi-

ness was hived off under the old name of W & C Scott, and Webley Scott concentrated on airguns.

Patrick Whitley, managing director of W & C Scott, said that peak production of up to 200 shotguns a year had declined markedly in recent years. He added: "Even people with money tend to hang on to it when there is a recession. The firm is world-renowned and it is very sad that we have to close. It is a bit of history that is going."

Nigel Brown, secretary of the Gun Trade Association, said that the closure meant that a trade landmark was being lost. "It has immense importance historically because it

was one of the biggest and best trade suppliers," he said. "It is extremely sad and will leave a nasty void."

The firm's shotguns were still used in the "highest circles", although the majority of new guns sold in Britain were imported, from countries that included Italy, Spain, Belgium and the United States.

Mr Brown added: "The British shotgun industry is still contracting. It has concentrated on high-quality items and with one or two exceptions has never managed to get itself going to feed the mass market. The English gun as such, properly made to craft standards, is priced out of the average market."

Waldegrave steps up NHS counter-attack with jobs assurance

By NICHOLAS WOOD, POLITICAL CORRESPONDENT

NATIONAL Health Service trusts are unlikely to lead to cuts in total staffing levels, William Waldegrave said yesterday as he intensified his efforts to blunt the Labour assault on self-governing hospitals.

In his most optimistic assessment so far, the health secretary said that evidence submitted to the Commons all-party health select committee on Wednesday was out of date and that the trusts would make little overall difference to job prospects.

"It is more likely that there will be about as many jobs created as lost in the 57 first-wave trusts", Mr Waldegrave said. He also underlined his commitment to the local management of hospitals by saying that he had no intention of putting an upper limit on the number of second-wave trusts.

The latest phase of the health secretary's counter-offensive came as John MacGregor, the leader of the Commons, claimed that Labour was retreating from its "scare story" that trust hos-

pitals had opted out of the NHS.

Mr MacGregor said that Jack Cunningham, his Opposition counterpart, had conceded that the allegation was groundless by referring to "NHS trusts" when complaining that ministers were refusing to answer parliamentary questions about the self-governing hospitals. Mr MacGregor said that where policy matters were involved, ministers would respond to questions about trusts. Local management would be for trust chairmen to handle.

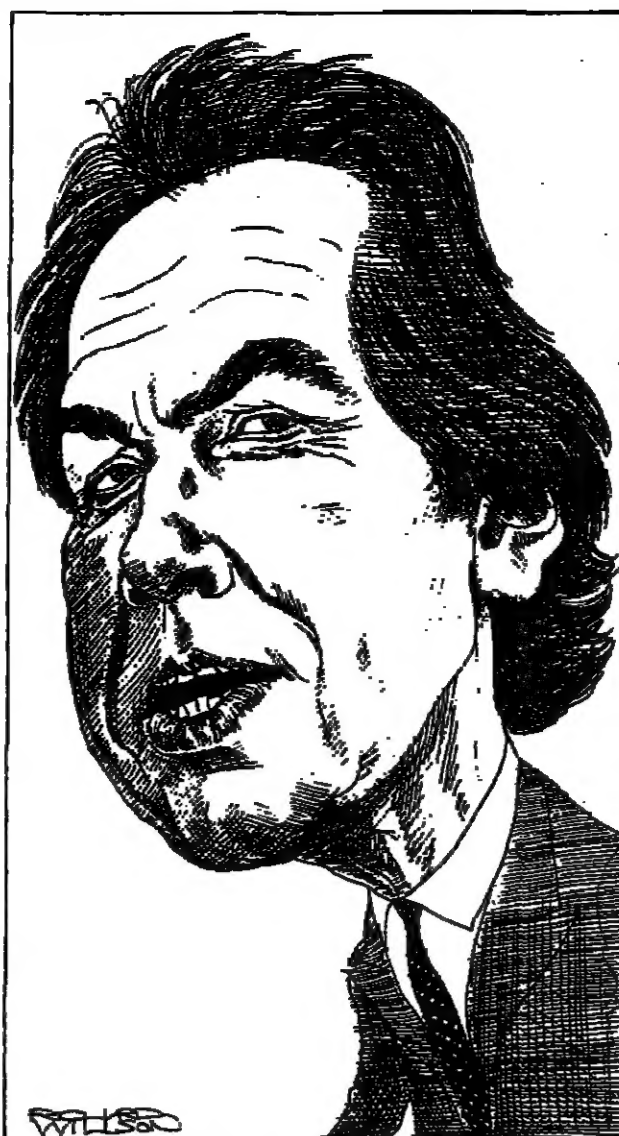
Mr MacGregor's claims, made in a letter to Dr Cunningham, were a further sign that, at the risk of labelling the point, ministers will not let the argument over the status of trust hospitals rest until they believe they have defused it as a potential election issue.

Mr Waldegrave's latest remarks update his prediction last week that the trusts threaten the jobs of only 200 staff among the 100,000 people working in the hospitals and clinics pioneering

the health service management shake-up.

The outcry over the impact of the reforms erupted at the end of last month when the Guy's and Lewisham trust in south London announced that it would have to make 600 staff redundant to head off a projected £6.8 million deficit. Since then the extent of the threat has been gradually scaled down. Sir Philip Harris, the trust chairman, softened the blow again on Wednesday when he told the health committee that, after allowing for natural wastage, a maximum of 130 redundancies would be required in south London.

Labour made clear, however, that it would press ahead with its claims that trusts were jeopardising services to patients and the jobs of NHS staff. Robin Cook, the Opposition's chief health spokesman, said that after the select committee hearing he had little confidence in the employment prospects of staff working for the new trusts. "It is clear", he said, "that the trusts have not got proper business plans."



Cunningham: mention of NHS trusts pleases Tories

Labour pledges extra staff to collect 'lost' tax

By PHILIP WEBSTER, CHIEF POLITICAL CORRESPONDENT

LABOUR promised yesterday to cut waste in the social security system by employing more staff to collect national insurance payments from the self-employed and child maintenance payments from absent parents.

Michael Meacher, the shadow social security secretary, accused the Conservatives of not caring less when it came to collecting public revenue. In a speech in his constituency, Oldham West, Mr Meacher, citing a social security department efficiency study, said that at least £250 million a year was lost because of failure to collect national insurance contributions from the self-employed, and that in 1988 the department collected maintenance payments from less than a quarter of absent parents.

The department, he said, had reduced its work on collecting from the self-employed to save £20 million in staff costs and there had been similar cuts in the number of employees involved in collecting maintenance payments. According to the National Audit Office, every £10,000 saved in staffing cost £82,000

in the amount of revenue forgone.

Mr Meacher's office said that, although Labour was not committed to restoring staff levels to what they were, the employment of more people on collection would clearly be cost-effective.

Mr Meacher said that he did not know how the Conservatives had the gall to suggest that the Labour party was irresponsible on public spending when it was wasting money in the social security system. "When the Tories are after some ideological objective, then it is public money no object. When it comes to collecting public revenue, they could not care less. All they mean by value for money is spending less on things they do not like."

In the light of their dismal record, Labour would take no lectures from the Tories on public spending. "We will replace Tory chaos and narrow ideology with sound administration of policies which meet real need."

Mr Meacher listed other areas of alleged waste. About £9.3 billion had been spent from the national insurance fund, he said, in rebates and incentives to persuade people to opt out of the state earnings-related pension scheme into private pensions and £1.8 billion was spent from general taxation for benefits that the national insurance fund could not pay for because of the Serps opt-out "bribe". That was equivalent to 1.5p on the basic rate of income tax.

He added that the social fund, introduced to target help on the very needy, spent 31 per cent of its expenditure on administration.

Military kick the smoking habit

Attempts by the defence ministry to cut smoking among service people seem to be succeeding. A survey has shown that fewer than forty in a hundred service people now smoke cigarettes and fewer than four in a hundred smoke cigars and pipes, according to a written answer from Archie Hamilton, the armed forces minister.

The ministry, he said, in another reply, had given widespread publicity to the harmful effects of smoking and it was policy to discourage smoking on military premises. Blue Liners, the cheap cigarettes sold to sailors, have become progressively dearer over the past few years, and the concession will end at the end of the year.

Women join campaign

An all-party group of women MPs has asked editors of women's magazines to stop accepting cigarette advertisements and to stop making smoking appear glamorous in their publications. The move follows wide support for a Commons motion tabled by Dame Janet Fookes (C) and backed by Joan Lester (Lab), Rosie Barnes (Ind SD) and Ray Michie (Lib Dem) calling for an advertising ban.

Channel link

British Rail expects to spend about £700 million on infrastructure works connected with passenger and freight services to the Channel tunnel. In a Commons answer, Roger Freeman, public transport minister, said that £250 million would go on building tracks and upgrading lines and £142 million on the Waterloo terminal.

M40 benefits

Traffic flows on the southern section of the M1 have fallen by between 4,000 and 19,000 vehicles each weekday since the M40 London to Birmingham motorway was completed, Christopher Chope, roads and traffic minister, said in a written reply.

Houses rise

Both Houses of Parliament rose for the spring recess yesterday and will return on June 3.

Peers left in dark

A BRIEF debate in the House of Lords last night left peers with no clear idea of what to expect from Britain's first national commercial radio station.

Earl Ferrers, Home Office minister, offered no precise definition of the "non-pop" music that the station will broadcast, or even of the pop music it must, for the most part, avoid. "It is rather like an elephant. You recognise it when you see it."

If the question went to court, then a judge would have to make the decision. The guidance in the act had never been intended as an exclusive definition.

Lord Thomson of Monifieth, former chairman of the Independent Broadcasting Authority, said that, in inviting applications for the licence for the new station, the radio authority had adopted a narrow and mechanistic interpretation of the new broadcasting act.

Nobel chemist hits at science support

By JOHN WINDER

A NOBEL prizewinning chemist used his maiden speech in the House of Lords yesterday to criticise the level of public support for science.

Lord Porter of Loddesham said that public financial support for scientific research seemed to come not only sparingly but grudgingly, with all sorts of strings attached. He and other scientists trying to unravel the fundamental process of photosynthesis had wasted two years filing unsuccessful applications for a laser essential to their research. They had had to borrow equipment.

Lord Porter, past president of the Royal Society, and a member of the Lords committee on science and technology, said that the research that he and nine young research fellows at Imperial College were carrying out was in an important and rapidly moving area.

Four years ago they had applied to the Science and Engineering Research Council for a laser. Their applications had been rejected every year since. "We have had to use old equipment, spending an inordinate amount of time filing applications and borrowing equipment."

There was nothing unusual in their situation which was about par for the course. The £25 million that remained this year to the research council to fund all the applications for research grants was less than 6 per cent of what it received from the government. Britain should retain the leading place it held in the development of science.

The debate had been opened by Lord Flowers and Lord Carver, presenting re-



Lady Blatch: £920m was spent on science last year

ports of select committees on scientific research, over which they presided.

Lord Flowers said that, having had a squeeze for many years on money available for science research, there was now no fat left in the system to meet shortages. The Treasury had "pulled a fast one" in providing less money than research councils had been led to expect. An extra £12 million should be provided this financial year.

Lord Carver said that there was a grey zone of considerable importance that was not well financed by government or industry.

Lord Walker of Donhead, a leading figure in the medical world, said that there was irrefutable evidence that research spending had often had to be cut to preserve teaching and patient care.

Lady Blatch, replying for the government, said that the science budget had risen from £329 million in 1979 to £920 million last year.

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East Germany turned child-snatcher to torment dissidents



Margot Honecker: barred parents for life

YOUNG East German dissidents had their children confiscated and handed over for adoption to families approved by the old communist regime, according to files discovered in the cellar of local council offices in Berlin.

"The state acted as a kidnapper," Thomas Krüger, the city's youth senator, said yesterday, when he appealed to parents who had lost their children to come forward and reclaim them. Files with details of eight cases were found in the cellar, wrapped in newspapers dated April 27, 1990, a month after the communists were voted out of office. Herr Krüger has now called for a search of records in other offices to find if there is evidence of other cases.

The files show that at least three of the children were forcibly adopted against their parents' will, while the others were sent to orphanages. One couple, expelled to the West in 1971, had a year-old

Files discovered in a Berlin cellar prove that the former communist regime forcibly removed the children of citizens who protested against its system, and gave them for permanent adoption to couples vetted and officially approved by the state. Ian Murray reports

baby girl and two boys, aged six and seven, taken away.

A married couple held as political prisoners, whose freedom was bought by West Germany in 1974, were forced to leave their two children behind for adoption by a communist family. A young mother, held for political reasons in a psychiatric hospital, wrote in vain to try to prevent her child being taken.

The files show that in one case a child was handed over to relatives, but that in others children were given to adoptive parents who lived in a different area and who were never told about the background. The East German regime always denied that it forcibly

adopted children of dissidents. In 1975 a correspondent of *Der Spiegel* was expelled after the magazine published an article giving details of such cases.

But under East German law, children of those caught trying to escape from the country or found guilty of military espionage were confiscated and the state became their guardian. On the instructions of Margot Honecker, education minister and wife of the communist leader, Erich, the parents were never permitted to see their children again.

Erich Mielke, the sick and senile old man who headed East Germany's secret police for most of its existence, has been charged with

implementing the shoot-to-kill policy under which nearly 200 people died as they tried to escape. He was handed the new charges in the West Berlin prison hospital, where he is awaiting trial for offences including illicit telephone tapping and electoral fraud.

The evidence against the 82-year-old former politburo member is listed on a 250-page charge sheet. Much of it has been found in the rooms of Stasi documents, meticulously filed down the years on his instructions. The files can also be used in the trials of Willi Stoph, the former East German prime minister, and Heinz Kessler, the defence minister, charged this week with involve-

ment in the shoot-to-kill policy. Around 30 former Stasi leaders are also under investigation by a special unit set up to disband the secret "state within the state". With 85,000 officials on its full-time payroll, Herr Mielke ensured that the Stasi had the resources to complete a file on every prominent and professional person. This has meant that files exist on most of the new political leaders in eastern Germany, making them vulnerable to accusations that they collaborated with the communist regime. Lothar de Maizière, the last East German prime minister, was forced to resign from the federal cabinet after his file was discovered.

Deciding what to do with all the Stasi dossiers, containing intimate details of the lives of millions of east Germans, is proving one of the more difficult and contentious issues of unification. Only after months of argument have the

political parties agreed that individuals must be allowed to see their files and discover the names of those who informed on them to the authorities.

But the files are not to be made available to the authorities, unless state security is involved, and then only with the permission of the interior minister, subject to parliamentary approval. A draft law on this, which has the support of all parties in the Bundestag except the communists, has just been completed by the interior ministry, and should be given a first reading in the Bundestag next month.

The aim of the law is to allow Stasi victims to rehabilitate themselves and make an objective historical, political and judicial assessment of the secret police's role. Stasi members and informers are not to be protected, as they are considered "basically not worth protecting".

Gandhi assassination enquiry weighs up Tamil and Sikh links as Congress looks for successor

Police seek to identify woman with suicide bomb

FROM ADAM KELLER IN MADRAS

THE dismembered head of a tall woman who assassinated Rajiv Gandhi was the focus of investigators yesterday, whose main theories are that Tamil guerrillas, Sikh extremists or unknown conspirators arranged the killing of the former Indian prime minister.

Subodh Kant Sahay, India's minister of state for home affairs, said that forensic experts had confirmed that the woman, who had yet to be identified, had concealed a high-powered bomb on her body. Sources in Madras said this exploded when she bent down to touch Gandhi's feet in a traditional gesture of Indian supplication during an election campaign visit to the town of Sriperumbudur, south of Madras.

The minister said that a wire, a spring and a British-made battery had been found on the remains of the woman's torso. The upper portion of her body had been totally blown away, but her face was intact, he added.

The following blast killed 16 people and hurled the assassin's head, with its long black hair, some 30 feet away towards a press enclosure. The device is believed to have been activated by the assassin pressing a button or by bending over. Either way, the sources in Madras said the bomb was sophisticated and not made in India, and claimed that foreign articles had been found amid the debris.

They said that forensic experts had established that the assassin was 5ft 8in tall and aged 25 to 30. Because of the woman's height, officers were pondering if she could have been a Sikh, who are generally taller than southern Indians. However, her dark complexion also bolstered theories that she may have been a Tamil. A source said: "In a day or two, her ethnicity should be established."

The team has drawn in expertise from at least four branches of government: the Central Bureau of Investigation, India's equivalent of the FBI; the Research and Analysis Wing, its version of the CIA; the Intelligence Bureau, a national security agency; and

the National Security Guard, which is responsible for protecting India's figures of power. According to sources, the various agencies have their pet theories about who killed Gandhi, with some seeing a link with Sikh zealots fighting for the secession of the northern Punjab state, and others thinking Tamil militants in Sri Lanka were responsible.

The involvement of Sri Lankan Tamils is the most popular theory because the island's main guerrilla group — the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam — have proved bombing expertise, a certain predilection for suicide, and an axe to grind with Gandhi because of his deployment of Indian firepower to enforce a Delhi-brokered peace initiative in 1987. However, Tamil sources in Madras discount this theory, saying that during the past three months Gandhi and the Tamil Tigers had made moves to mend their fences, should he have been returned to power in the elections. The process was reportedly set in train by Gandhi's political ally, Jayalalitha, a former film actress whose regional party is expected to make great gains in the Tamil Nadu polls.

Those looking for a conspiracy say the unknown woman was an assassin hired by somebody in Colombo who feared the return of Gandhi. He had cool links with President Premadasa of Sri Lanka, and oversaw a military expansion programme and strident foreign policy watched warily by other South Asian nations.

The Sri Lanka Broadcasting Corporation yesterday preceded a broadcast about the assassination with a popular Tamil song. The choice has been interpreted as an oblique message as the lyrics roughly translate: "If he has gone, let him go, and good riddance."

The authorities in Madras brought in about 3,000 more security personnel to reinforce police for today, when Gandhi's cremation takes place in Delhi. Many shops remained closed in the Tamil Nadu capital, but some stores were looted.

Leading article, page 15.



In sympathy: Benazir Bhutto, the former Pakistani prime minister, offering her condolences in Delhi yesterday to Priyanka and Rahul Gandhi, the children of the assassinated Congress (I) leader

Widow's reticence puts dynasty on sidelines

FROM CHRISTOPHER THOMAS IN DELHI

SONIA Gandhi's refusal to take over the leadership of the Congress (I) party — assuming she means what she says — confirms the suspicion, if not the end, of the Nehru dynasty. It is a measure of the party's desperation to maintain continuity that it relied on a foreign-born Christian simply because she had the name.

But the party that has ruled India for most of the 44 years of independence should not be written off. It may not have a Gandhi or a Nehru as its prime ministerial candidate, but it does have the prospect of being carried to power on a wave of sympathy when the delayed general election is completed next month.

Rajiv and Sonia Gandhi's two children — son Rahul, aged 20, and daughter Priyanka, aged 21 — are too young to stand for parliament since the minimum age is 25. Priyanka is interested in politics and might seek the party leadership in the future.

If Mrs Gandhi sticks to her decision, there are only two viable dynasty options, both of them long shots: Arun Nehru and Maneka Gandhi. Each would like the job, but

neither was popular with Gandhi or his widow, and they are not Congress members.

Arun Nehru's grandfather was the brother of Jawaharlal Nehru, India's first prime minister. A former businessman, Arun Nehru became the most powerful man behind Gandhi when he first came to power in 1984. It is said that Sonia Gandhi disliked him.

Having been squeezed out of the inner circle, he left Congress and joined a group called the Jan Morcha, one of the original components of the present Janata Dal (People's party) led by V. P. Singh, who succeeded Gandhi as prime minister. He is not a contender in the general election.

He was originally persuaded to enter politics by Sanjay Gandhi, Rajiv's younger brother, who died in an air crash in 1980. Maneka Gandhi, widow of Sanjay, is India's most prominent "green" politician. She did not get on with Indira Gandhi, the former prime minister assassinated in 1984, and after Sanjay's death drifted away from the family. She left the Congress party and now belongs to the small

Janata Dal (S) group, headed by Chandrabhai Shekhar, the caretaker prime minister in whose government she was an environment minister.

Congress was certain that with Sonia Gandhi as its leader, it would romp to power on a sympathy wave. But even without being able to project her as the prime ministerial candidate, the party will plaster her image across the country to try to sustain the sympathy factor.

Congress believes it can weather the humiliation of appointing a party president who then turned it down, since she did so with dignity, citing the needs of her children. India's educated middle classes were outraged that a foreign-born Christian woman should have been selected to lead the country's principal political party, as if there were an absence of indigenous talent.

But in the villages, where 80 per cent of Indians live, the choice was popular, both because of a continuing, if diminishing, attachment to the Gandhi-Nehru dynasty and because of sympathy for Mrs Gandhi.

Party men jostle for leadership

BY CHRISTOPHER THOMAS

WITH the death of Rajiv Gandhi, Congress (I) tried to induct his widow, Sonia, as party president. It wanted her as a figurehead because of her name. The real power, however, lies with the party barons who are now jostling for influence. The key figures are: P. V. Narasimha Rao: He was the front runner for the party presidency before the surprise decision to select Sonia Gandhi. He is a respected elder statesman, better known in southern India than the north. Gandhi used Mr Rao, aged 69, as a political troubleshooter. He headed a panel that drew up the party manifesto.

Pranab Mukherjee: He was also regarded as a potential successor to Gandhi as party president. He was recently appointed as its official spokesman. Mr Mukherjee, aged 55, was finance minister for a time during Indira Gandhi's rule. He played a central role in formulating Rajiv Gandhi's economic policies. He has close connections with India's big industrialists and heads the party's secretive finance committee, which collects funds. Jitendra Prasad: He was polit-

ical secretary to Gandhi, a position that made him one of only two aides with a permanent office at Gandhi's private Delhi residence. He maintains close contacts with opinion-makers not directly involved in politics, as well as with non-Congress political leaders. Ghulam Nabi Azad: A sharp-tongued insider, he wields substantial power as head of the party's parliamentary board, which selects electoral candidates.

Mani Shankar Aiyer: He was one of a coterie of old friends with the power to block access to Gandhi, who he got to know at Doon school.

Makhana Lal Foteler: A Congress insider from the time of Indira Gandhi, he was latterly involved in attempts to negotiate electoral alliances. As a member of the party's finance committee he was involved in allocating funds to candidates. Satish Sharma: He was a friend from Gandhi's days as an Indian Airlines pilot. The party elders have never accepted him, regarding him as a non-political intruder. But he was closely involved in some of Gandhi's more secretive political ventures.

Berlin regime shielded former nazis

FROM ANNE McELVOY IN BERLIN

NAZI documents found in an east Berlin archive were used by the former communist regime to blackmail West Germans and recruit them as spies, officials said yesterday.

The files had been hidden in a suburban building since the 1950s. The Stasi security police kept six miles of nazi files in the archive in Hohenschönhausen, including records of cases heard by the nazi supreme court, the Volksgerichtshof, and euthanasia files, the magazine *Der Spiegel* disclosed this week. The board also contains the SS records of deportations in Poland and the Soviet Union, long believed to have been destroyed.

The files were taken by the Russians at the end of the war and later handed back to the East German government. West Germans who had committed crimes under Hitler were often blackmailed into working for the East. The Simon Wiesenthal documentation centre in Vienna has evidence that a nazi mass murderer was blackmailed into working for the Stasi and then protected by the organisation from prosecution.

The discoveries may lead to the discovery of the fate of Gerhard Thiele, a Third Reich district political commissioner, who in the last days of the war rounded up 1,000 prisoners from the Mittelbau-Dora concentration camp, drove them into a barn and set fire to it. He was known to be living in the east, but a court case opened against him in Magdeburg was suspended without explanation.

Herr Wiesenthal said that he was horrified at the use of nazi records by the Stasi. "It is a scandal that the East Germans should have protected mass murderers in this way," he said. He also accused the old regime of hindering justice. "We needed these files 20 years ago. Now it is probably too late." Tilman Kooops, of the federal archive office in Koblenz, said the find might still lead to arrests.

The authorities also suppressed crimes when it suited them. "Forbidding investigations into nazi judges, doctors and intelligence agents they had recycled as socialist citizens. 'Political considerations took precedence over legal ones,' a Stasi archivist told *Der Spiegel*. 'Certain people were not charged because the world would have seen that there were nazis in the east.'"

Majority of Arabs want democracy and religion

FROM CHRISTOPHER WALKER IN CAIRO

MOST Arabs see Western-style democracy as the best form of government, according to a rare survey of opinion in the Arab world by the leading Egyptian newspaper, *al-Ahram*, which also found that many wanted enforcement of Sharia (Islamic law).

The result of the poll was seen as carrying a powerful message to the variety of non-democratic and quasi-democratic rulers in the Middle East, where many independent observers describe Israel as the only genuine democracy. Describing the poll of 4,997 people chosen as "a cross-section of the Arab world", the paper, which has close links with the government of President Mubarak, said that more than 50 per cent favoured the introduction of rigid Sharia.

Al-Ahram claimed that the survey was the first of its kind

in the region since the Gulf war. The findings, though treated with caution by Western observers, confirmed diplomatic reports of a recent growth in support for democratic institutions and Islamic fundamentalism, especially among young Arabs.

Of those questioned, 56 per cent favoured the introduction of Western-style democracy and 52.3 per cent demanded the application of Sharia, which would involve bans on alcohol and gambling and introduction of Islamic punishments. Among some Arabs, particularly in the Gulf, the proportion supporting democracy was higher.

The paper said that 69 per cent of Saudis, 71 per cent of Bahrainis, 87.5 per cent of Kuwaitis, 89 per cent of Qataris and 90 per cent of those from the United Arab Emirates wanted democracy

to be introduced. "Sudan was the only country, according to the poll, in which the majority was against a democratic system. A minority of 42 per cent favoured democracy," *al-Ahram* reported.

One European diplomat commented: "The poll findings are fascinating, if not of the most scientific variety. They seem to bear out the result of the most democratic election yet seen in the Arab world: the Jordanian parliamentary election of 1989, which saw sweeping gains for the fundamentalists."

As a result, fundamentalists now control 32 of the 72 seats in Jordan's lower house of parliament in Amman. Western governments are suspected of having been slow in encouraging democracy in Arab countries partly because it could lead to big gains for fundamentalist parties.



President Mubarak, above, who will be the first Egyptian leader since the 1952 revolution to pay a state visit to Britain. The visit is expected to provoke controversy at home and abroad (Christopher Walker writes). The dates, July 23-26, coincide with an Egyptian national holiday to mark the overthrow of the late King Farouk. A senior Egyptian official said: "It came like an electric shock when I heard that the president will be out of the country at that time."

Israel holds firm to settler policy

FROM RICHARD BEESTON IN JERUSALEM

ISRAEL yesterday rebuffed British and American attacks on its settlement policy in the occupied territories and instead tried to blame Syria for holding up progress on Middle East peace talks.

Reacting to criticism on Wednesday from Douglas Hurd, the foreign secretary, and James Baker, the American Secretary of State, Israel's right-wing government made it clear that it was unrepentant and intended to continue its controversial policy of encouraging Jewish colonization of occupied Arab lands.

Yossi Ben-Aharon, director-general of the office of Yitzhak Shamir, the prime minister, said that Jews had a right to live where they wanted and the world was mistaken if it believed that the settlement issue was hindering the chances of success for the US-led peace initiative.

Mr Ben-Aharon said: "As the prime minister explained both to President Bush and Secretary Baker time and again, this is not the obstacle, and do not focus on this issue because it is inconceivable in Judea, Samaria [the biblical names for the West Bank] and the Gaza Strip."

The areas were captured by Israel during the six-day war in 1967 and have been under Israeli military administration since that time. They are home to about 1.75 million Palestinians and 100,000 right-wing Jewish settlers.

The present government is encouraging new settlers to move to the territories by offering them financial incentives, and Ariel Sharon, the housing minister, has launched a construction plan aimed at increasing the settler population by 50 per cent over the next two years.

Hezbollah offers to swap captives

FROM ALI JABER IN BEIRUT

SHEIKH Abbas Mousawi, the new leader of Hezbollah, the pro-Iranian Muslim fundamentalist group, said yesterday that he was ready to exchange two Israeli soldiers in his custody since 1986 with Arab and Lebanese prisoners held in Israel.

If the exchange materialises, it could remove the last obstacle to the release of about 12 foreigners held here for many months by shadowy groups affiliated to Hezbollah. Sheikh Mousawi announced "our readiness for an honourable swap". Admitting for the first time that his group holds two of seven Israeli soldiers announced missing in Lebanon since 1986, Sheikh Mousawi said: "We have already set our conditions and conveyed them to the concerned party through the press or intermediary organisations."

Among them are six Americans, three Britons, two Germans and an Italian. Their fate is believed to be tightly linked with that of Shia and Arab guerrillas imprisoned in Israel for attacks on the "security zone" in south Lebanon.

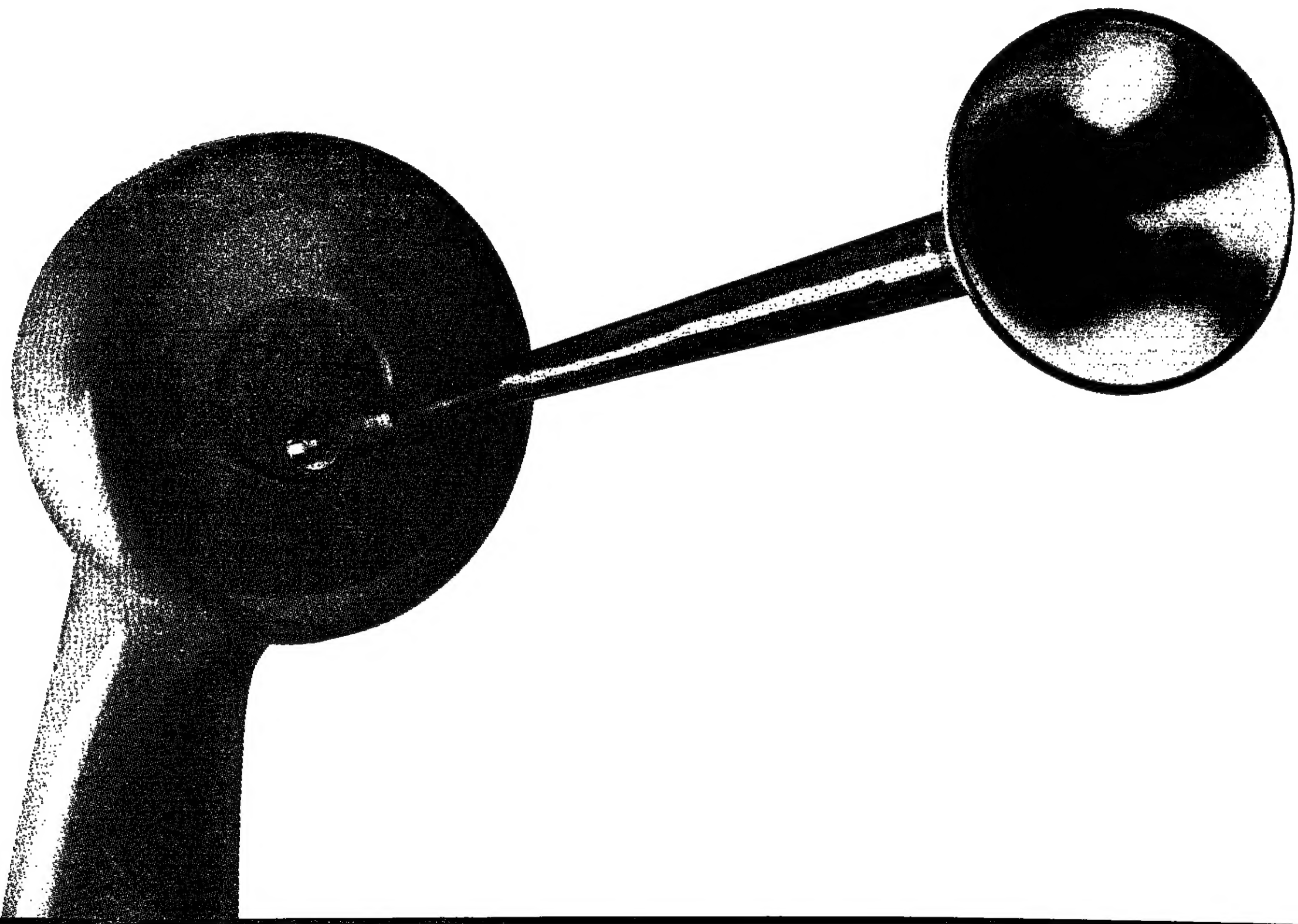
Yossi Fink and Rahamin Alsheck were captured in a Hezbollah ambush during an Israeli incursion into southern Lebanon in 1985. Another Israeli airman was captured by the Shia Amal militia after his jet was shot down over Sidon, 30 miles south of Beirut, and was later handed over to Hezbollah.

Sheikh Mousawi said that repeated efforts to swap the Israelis with Lebanese and Arab prisoners in the Jewish state were deadlocked and he blamed Tel Aviv for complicating the issue. He described the foreign hostages as "spies who deserve death."

Among them are six Americans, three Britons, two Germans and an Italian. Their fate is believed to be tightly linked with that of Shia and Arab guerrillas imprisoned in Israel for attacks on the "security zone" in south Lebanon.

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Rebels press Addis Ababa defences as Lenin topples

From DAVID CHAZAN IN ADDIS ABABA

ETHIOPIANS were overjoyed to see government workers tear down a huge bronze statue of Lenin here yesterday, amid celebrations at the flight of President Mengistu, but there was also apprehension at rebel advances towards the capital.

The insurgents have so far spurned the government's offer of an immediate ceasefire before peace talks, due to open in London on Monday, raising fears of a bloodbath in Addis Ababa.

About 100 people gathered to watch the workers, who laughed and joked as they unbolled the 33ft-high monument to the socialist ideology that brought them bloody, Stalinist-style purges, civil war and famine. They also tore down giant portraits of Lieutenant-Colonel Mengistu after the departure for Zimbabwe of the man who ruled Ethiopia by blood and terror for 14 years. The crowd took the appearance of a rainbow as a sign from God that the troubles of famine-stricken Ethiopia, ravaged by 30 years of civil war, were ending.

Tesfaye Gabre Kidan, the acting president, pleaded with the rebels to observe an immediate ceasefire ahead of the peace talks, mediated by America. But the rebels vowed to fight on until the government left by Colonel Mengistu was wiped out.

In what was seen as a step towards dismantling Colonel Mengistu's mechanism of repression, Ethiopia's highest executive body, the state council, announced the freeing of 180 political prisoners. They included nine people implicated in an abortive coup in May 1989, which ended in the execution of 12 guerrillas.

Guerrillas of the Ethiopian People's Revolutionary Democratic Front were said by diplomatic sources to be within 18 miles of the capital. The sources said that the guerrillas, which have promised to halt before Addis Ababa, had continued to advance after taking Addis Ababa, 33 miles west of the capital, a diplomat said. "The army just came in. It looks like they're coming in. Now that they can see the gates of Addis, I doubt whether the political leaders will be able to hold back their fighters, given that they aren't encountering any resistance."

Another diplomat said he had seen dozens of soldiers in Addis Ababa who had apparently fled the fighting. In a move indicating a degree of panic among the armed forces, four air force pilots have flown to neighbouring Djibouti, asking for political asylum. An unknown number of other pilots were said to have fled to Aden, in Yemen.

In a broadcast to the nation on Addis Ababa radio, General Tesfaye said that if the rebels fought their way into the capital, the situation might become even uglier. He said the authorities were committed to setting up a transitional government comprising all parties, in line with rebel demands. The regime was waiting for an urgent response from the opposition parties to the call for a ceasefire so that bloodshed could immediately be halted, he added.

Some observers, however, remained hopeful that the departure of Colonel Mengistu would clear the way for agreement at the peace talks. A diplomat said that the Ethiopian front had a choice between going to London or coming into Addis Ababa, and it might just be easier to take the city, although the international community would not welcome another government imposed by force.

Ethiopia's other main rebel group, the Eritrean People's Liberation Front, has also stepped up its offensive. The movement, fighting for the independence of the Red Sea province of Eritrea, announced that it had captured the town of Dekemhare, 24 miles south of Asmara, the encircled Eritrean capital which is still held by the government but is frequently bombarded.

Diplomatic sources said that America, the Soviet Union and the European Community were putting pressure on all the sides to settle their grievances at the peace talks, which will include representatives of the Ethiopian and Eritrean fronts and a third, another movement, the Amhara Liberation Front.

There was mounting concern at the plight of some seven million people threatened by famine. The United Nations has suspended many relief operations after an upsurge of fighting last week, which prevented food convoys reaching the drought-stricken north. (AFP)



Bitter earth: a rebel of the United Somali Congress in Chisimale, seized from government forces last month

Famine threatens Somali capital as thousands of refugees flock in

The rebel victory at Mogadishu has proved hollow, Tim Deagle reports, as Western agencies try to feed children in a city on the brink of mass starvation

THE impossibly thin child hung in the weighing harness, kicking and screaming in protest. Loose folds of skin hung from her skeletal arms and legs, covering nothing but tissue and bone, the harsh midday sun making dark shadows of her sunken eyes and deep valleys between her protruding ribs.

The needle on the scales above her head jumped wildly as she kicked into the humid air, but it settled at 7½lb when, tired by her efforts, she hung motionless, swinging gently in the harness, moaning softly. Bisher weighs less now than when she was born a year ago. According to Save the Children's Somalia director, Paul Simon, she is just one of 30,000 dangerously malnourished children in a city of 800,000 on the brink of mass starvation.

"The situation is chronic. We are planning to do more, opening more feeding centres, but it's not going to be enough," he says. "Until the international organisations come in here with the vast quantities of food that is needed, these people will simply continue to deteriorate rapidly from bloody hungry to starving. It's as simple as that."

Mogadishu is a city in ruins. The brutal civil war that has ravaged Somalia since the beginning of the year has brought the country to the verge of collapse and left its capital almost totally destroyed and unable to feed its population. Save the

Children is one of only three aid agencies working in Somalia at present: the United Nations and the other big donor organisations pulled out when the fighting between the government forces and the opposition United Somali Congress (USC) threatened to engulf Mogadishu.

The front line is now 217 miles to the south, but so far only Save the Children, the Red Cross and Médecins sans Frontières have returned, as they are warning that they cannot avert the famine by themselves. "We have run out of time, that is the bottom line. People are already dying in Mogadishu from starvation and I don't see any food getting in here for another six or seven weeks of any significant amount," says Ben Foot, Save the Children director.

At the Save the Children intensive-feeding centre in the refugee camps that cover what was once a children's fairground, two lines of women sit on the concrete floor cradling barely living examples of malnutrition. With skin stretched tight across their gaunt faces, above bodies so devoid of flesh and muscle as to defy belief, children wait for the first of four meals a day that will try to add some substance to their empty frames.

Success, if that term can be applied in a place of such desperation, is measured in grammes. A gain in weight of 200 grammes in 24 hours is considered good progress. Gains are small and desperately slow, the losses tragic and frequent.

Last month, despite the best efforts of the aid workers here, 30 children died in this clinic alone, but the Save the Children team say it is just a fraction of the numbers dying across the city. "It is meaningless to say that 30 children died in our feeding centre last month, because we know many, many more are dying in their homes in the city unseen, and that is where the vast majority will die. We can only reach 1,500 children out of 30,000, so we just do not see them die — but they will die just the same."

Mogadishu has seen the death of thousands in the battle to control the city. The USC now holds the capital, having defeated the government forces of ex-President Siad Barre and driven them south, but the victory is a hollow one. The scars of war adorn every building in the shape of scores of bullet holes and smashed and burnt masonry from tanks and artillery shells. Most of

Mogadishu's ministries, banks, offices, shops, museums and many homes are now no more than piles of blackened rubble.

The city's cathedral, bombed by the government's forces and later looted and burnt by the opposition, is a scene of almost total destruction. The altar lies smashed and bullet-ridden below a statue of Christ decapitated by a piece of shrapnel.

The city has been without electricity for months now and the only lights illuminating Mogadishu at night are the multicoloured tracer bullets that scream over the city, fired by bored USC soldiers.

This lethal nightly display, accompanied by the sound of heavy machineguns, small arms and sometimes mortar fire, continues until dawn. Bullets are plentiful and cheap and can be bought in large quantities from cigarette vendors in the street.

Food, however, is scarce and very expensive. The large amount of rice and grain looted from government stores during the fighting is running out quickly as the only place to buy new supplies is the black market. But with the economy in shreds and inflation out of control, few can afford the high prices.

One egg costs 8,000 Somali shillings (£1.17), and with prices doubling every 10 days the number of people able to buy even the most basic necessities is diminishing. The money-changers who loiter by the



Life in the balance: at a feeding centre Bisher weighed less than when born a year ago

waterfront carry huge bundles of banknotes wrapped in bright bath towels. Ten dollars worth of Somali shillings is too big for your wallet and to pay a hotel bill you need a medium-sized briefcase. A year ago 500 shillings would have bought a decent meal in a restaurant with change left over for a couple of bottles of beer and a taxi home. Today the same amount will buy you a box of matches.

Desperately thin children line the streets begging barefoot, clothed in torn and dirty shorts and T-shirts advertising American soft drinks and European football teams. More and more of the population are turning to the aid agencies for help, but with extremely limited supplies the vast majority have been turned away hungry. With thousands arriving from rural areas

looking for food, limited resources that are already insufficient will soon become insignificant.

At one of the fast-expanding refugee camps on the city outskirts, 4,000 people live in makeshift tents and huts made of rags, plastic sheeting, driftwood and whatever they can scavenge from the rubbish heap lining the roads. Some refugees have travelled 250 miles to find food and they have arrived in a city that offers them perhaps less than where they came from. There is no feeding programme, no aid at all. They have little money and are growing desperate.

An old man, his spine bent, leaning heavily on his walking stick, stood next to me. I offered him a cigarette. "Thank you but, no," he replied. "You see, we can't eat cigarettes."

Aid signal to Moscow by Bush

From MARTIN FLETCHER IN WASHINGTON

PRESIDENT Bush yesterday signalled that he was ready to consider an anticipated Soviet request for massive infusions of Western aid to rescue the Soviet Union's failing economy in return for fundamental reforms. He added that the viability of Soviet plans could well determine whether President Gorbachev was invited to July's G7 economic summit in London.

Mr Bush confirmed that at President Gorbachev's request he would receive a top-level Soviet delegation next week which was expected to present him with "new ideas" on economic reform. He predicted "a lot of diplomacy" and consultations with allies between now and the London summit of the world's leading industrialised nations. All the options on whether to invite Mr Gorbachev, and in what capacity, remained open.

Mr Gorbachev suggested in Moscow on Wednesday that the Soviet Union needed up to \$100 billion (£59 billion) in Western aid over an unspecified number of years. James Baker, the US Secretary of State, told congressmen the same day that such aid would be strictly conditional on Moscow implementing radical economic and political reform. That now appears to be exactly what Mr Gorbachev is considering.

Mr Bush said it was in the interests of America that the Soviet Union reformed and that the country became more democratic. He went on: "I have never believed President Gorbachev has given up on reform."

Mr Bush had not yet received any specific proposal from Mr Gorbachev, but when one came his answer would be to look at it. He said that \$100 billion was a "large piece of change" which would have to be looked at positively but also realistically.



Darling buds of May: Dudley Reid, aged 84, proposing to Minnie Monroe, aged 102, his sweetheart of four years, at Point Clare nursing village, near Sydney, Australia

Powell to serve second term as Pentagon chief

From MARTIN FLETCHER IN WASHINGTON

PRESIDENT Bush said yesterday that General Colin Powell would serve a second term as chairman of the joint chiefs of staff, thereby quelling speculation that the Gulf war celebrity might replace Dan Quayle, the vice-president, on the 1992 Republican ticket or — a remote possibility — run for the Democrats.

Mr Bush's announcement, made a full four months before the expiration of General Powell's first two-year term, closely follows the presidential health scare that triggered a fresh clamour for the jettisoning of Mr Quayle. The president has never wavered in his loyalty to his widely derided vice-president.

The announcement coincided with a bout of speculation about General Powell's judgment and political affiliations. This was inspired by a new book by Bob Woodward, the journalist who helped expose the Watergate scandal, which claimed that America's top general was at odds with President Bush's readiness to go to war with Iraq and sympathetic to the Democratic policy of relying on sanctions.

Some reports have suggested that General Powell was a primary source for Woodward's book. Though he has occupied top posts under two Republican presidents, the general has never divulged his political allegiance. White House sources suggested that the timing of Mr Bush's announcement was intended primarily to demonstrate harmony between him and the general, rather than to aid Mr Quayle. The president went out of his way yesterday to emphasise his great confidence in General Powell, saying that he had been a "constructive force all the way along the line".

Mr Bush said that in the run-up to the war, the general "told me the risks, he told me what was at stake in human life, he told me what his view was to how it would go if we had to commit forces, which was always very positive, and I am unhappy about revisionist views of things". Neither man explicitly denied that the general had advised against the use of force.

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Britain accused on airport

Peking — Chinese officials appeared to blame their British counterparts for the failure of the two sides to reach an agreement after five days' talks on Hong Kong's plans for a new airport (Catherine Sampson writes).

Wu Jianmin, the Chinese foreign ministry spokesman, said that Peking had offered British officials a draft agreement during their negotiations.

Andrew Burns, the head of the British delegation, declined to say whether any progress had been made and said that he did not know whether another round of talks would be held.

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Miss Mexico sees glamour in a free trade zone

A single market would widen chances for Canadian, American and Mexican trade and reduce the threat of competition from Europe and Japan, Susan Ellicott writes in Washington

AT THE Miss Universe 1991 contest earlier this month in Las Vegas, the three finalists for the crown were asked to name the most important goal for their country. Happiness, said Miss Soviet Union. Protecting the environment, said Miss Netherlands. Miss Mexico, however, outdid her rivals: a free trade agreement with the rest of North America. The \$250,000 (£144,000) prize was hers.

The White House itself could not have thought of a better public relations drive for one of President Bush's top legislative priorities — a trading zone stretching from the Yukon to Yucatan, linking the world's largest and two of its top 15 economies. The Bush administration claims that a three-nation trading bloc without border tariffs, creating a single market larger than post-1992 Europe, would boost opportunities for American, Canadian and Mexican workers, while failure could make America prey to competition from Europe and Japan.

The country which stands to benefit most by far from a North American free trade pact is Mexico as Carlos Salinas de Gortari, its

right-wing president, forges ahead with bold plans to drive his country out of a historic isolation. Over the past few years, barriers to overseas competition have eased. Mexican supermarkets now stock American Budweiser beer, Californian wine, and a wider array of consumer goods than five years ago.

For Mexico's expanding middle class, a free trade agreement with the United States, which would commit Señor Salinas's successors to his reforms, holds out the hope of further prosperity. Mr Bush, under whose presidency American relations have steadily improved since the Reagan years, sees an opening not simply for further exports to Mexico, but for a foreign policy master stroke.

As Robert Lawrence, an economist with the Brookings Institution think tank, puts it, a North Ameri-

can free trade zone would be a "fantastically good move with respect to Latin America". As European countries have moved toward establishing a single market, South American countries, too, have taken steps toward greater economic groupings. Argentina, Uruguay and Paraguay have set up one free trade zone; Mexico, Colombia and Venezuela another. Canada and the United States signed a free trade accord in 1989.

Favouring closer trade ties rather than aid to support moves by Latin and Central American governments towards democracy and economic health, the Bush administration has signed bilateral free trade pacts with Chile, Peru and El Salvador. Free trade negotiations with Mexico, Mr Bush's economic team argues, would allow the United States to consolidate these efforts.

So far American political debate about the proposed North American free trade zone has focused on a vote to grant Mr Bush special authority instead of Congress to negotiate the package. The House and Senate, despite intensive lobbying by labour unions and environmental groups, were expected to vote as early as yesterday in favour of handing over the responsibility to Mr Bush, forfeiting a right to amend the resulting package, with protection measures.

Opponents of a US-Mexico-Canada deal complain that America is likely to lose as many as hundreds of thousands of jobs because US firms will move south of the 2,000-mile US-Mexico border in order to take advantage of cheaper wages and laxer anti-pollution laws.

Few would argue that their fears are groundless. The Bush administration has pledged to pressure Mexico on pollution and safety controls and has said that casualties in the job market will be a short-term difficulty, giving way to openings as the wealth of Mexico's 90 million inhabitants increases. Ot-

tawa supports an agreement, despite domestic grumbling that the free trade accord with the United States increased unemployment as the country went into a deep recession.

Mr Bush himself has staked his reputation on trade. As a Texan, he has a better understanding of the importance of good relations with Mexico than many of his predecessors in the White House. The influential "Texas connection" in his cabinet includes James Baker, his Secretary of State, and Robert Moebacher, his commerce secretary. For these men, one advantage of free trade with Mexico is especially obvious — a halt in the illegal immigration of thousands of Mexicans into the United States.

His supporters argue that since 2.6 million American jobs moved offshore during the 1980s, mainly to the Pacific Rim, the United States might as well pursue economic ties with Mexico, which is nearer than Korea or Taiwan. That way at least some firms in California could split their operations across the border.

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Kate Muir talks to Alan Ayckbourn, professor-designate and Scarborough leading light, about good writing and commercial success

A chorus of approval for the last resort

Of to see Oxford university's next professor of contemporary theatre, who resides, naturally, in sunny Scarborough. Like any academic, the prof does not stray far from his sources, and the Yorkshire seaside town has the added advantage that more material is imported every day, all summer, by British Rail. Today's trans-Pennine express has a batch of pensioner pairs on saver tickets. Generally she is knitting another cardie, while he is filming the rails and trees going by with his video camera. They are ideal characters for the prof, a.k.a. playwright Alan Ayckbourn, because they fulfil his criteria of being lower middle-class, dull, and probably suffocated by a bad marriage.

"Mmmmm. It's the Saga time of year again," Mr Ayckbourn says. "Hate an audience that's all one thing, all OAPs or all kids. Too one-dimensional. It's lovely to have a good mixed audience." And that is usually what he gets at the Stephen Joseph theatre, opposite Tesco's car-park, Scarborough, where he has premiered almost all of his 43 plays.

As the most regularly performed playwright in Britain (Shakespeare comes a poor second at the moment), Mr Ayckbourn's talents have at last been recognised by the academic establishment, and he will follow Stephen Sondheim and Sir Ian McKellen in the year-long Oxford post. There is a frisson of suitableness about the appointment of such a populist, the creator of such titles as *Bedroom Farce* and *How the Other Half Loves*, as though Jeffrey Archer had been asked to lecture in English literature.

But Mr Ayckbourn is endearingly direct. He admits he would not know a seminar if he met it in his soup. "I'm a complete fraud. I never even went to university, so I think the course will be intensely practical, not theoretical." He will teach what he is good at, writing and directing, bringing whole plays and casts down to Oxford to be dissected, front and backstage.

This is not the first time he has suffered the slings and arrows of outrageous snobbery. He recalls

theatre directors announcing their new season: "It will be full and exciting. We shall not be resorting to Alan Ayckbourn and Agatha Christie." The playwright of last resort is not happy being bracketed with Miss Christie. "It seems in this country that you can't be commercially successful and good. You're either one or the other."

The 300-seat Stephen Joseph theatre is one of the few British repertory companies with a toe-hold in the black. As its (unpaid) artistic director, Mr Ayckbourn stages his new play each year, and directs a couple of others which are usually less lucrative. London's critics are forced to schlep up to Scarborough for the yearly Ayckbourn premiere, which tends to make them a little irritated and patronising. The latest production, *Wildest*

'They've had nudity, poor loves, male and female, and now they've got women kissing each other. Heaven knows what's next'

Dreams, opened earlier this month to good reviews, although Irving Wardle in the *Independent on Sunday* said: "Why bother to write ambitious pieces if London is going to ignore them, when he can produce less taxing material to entertain his seaside customers?"

Mr Ayckbourn is at pains to point out he considers comedy to be the highest of art forms, and not the lowest. His work is occasionally described as "sitcom", much to his disgust, because he writes about middle classes in living-rooms. "Hmph. But so do they all."

If Mr Ayckbourn did a bit more posing around with the right people, or at least looked as if he was suffering for his art, the critics and intellectuals might be better disposed. But they resent him for making an estimated £1 million a year in royalties, driving a big

BMW, and living in a whopping Georgian rectory.

There is also the problem with his appearance. He looks like the Pillsbury Doughboy. Too many dinners, too many chins, not enough angst. Worse still, he is wearing a San Francisco 49ers T-shirt and LA Gear trainers with fluorescent laces. He is 52.

Such clothing is in fact a clue to the amount of energy he expends directing. The company is rehearsing one play in the morning, and another in the afternoon in an old classroom, and Mr Ayckbourn is padding around, physically turning people in the right direction, making a suggestion here, a comment there. He subscribes to the indirect school of directing, rather than shouting and frontal attack. "I tend to get to know actors quickly, because they have to use aspects of themselves for the part."

I don't know much about their personal life outside, but by the time we've finished I know a lot about their psyches, inside. Actors need to be strong, they need a solid lead centre or they won't survive, and somehow you've got to make them all work in one room and respect and spark each other. It's half psychiatry and half diplomacy."

As Mr Ayckbourn gets older, his interest in inside grows. When he wrote his first play, *The Square Cat*, as a 20-year-old jobbing actor, he merely wanted to create a large part for himself and get the girl. Now, confidence in the basics of structuring a play means he can spend more time on character, and less on the surface situation. "If you scratch people, they get darker."

His comedy has gone from tasteful beige to completely black over the years. *Wildest Dreams* is a romp featuring a former abused child, an insane wife who regresses to babyhood, a stroke, and a couple of lesbians. It is the I-didn't-know-whether-to-laugh-or-cry school of comedy, and it has Scarborough's Saga-trippers twitching in their seats. "They do intake their breath when the women kiss, I must say," gloats Mr Ayckbourn from a flowered armchair in the middle of the

round stage set, surrounded by seats. "Ooh, they go, 'heavens'. But it is pretty harmless. It's a fact of life. They've had nudity, poor loves, full frontal male and female, and now they've got women kissing each other. Heaven knows what's next."

Although the content of the next play may be variable, the time it takes to write will be, as usual, one week. The playwright hates writing plays. He used to be a deadline junkie, unable to put hand to word processor until just a few days before rehearsals were about to start. The theatre would advertise the title and print the playbills four weeks beforehand to encourage the author to get down to it. Meanwhile Mr Ayckbourn would be at home, doing jigsaws and playing patience and waiting for ideas. Then suddenly, he would write non-stop and arrive

one morning with an almost perfect manuscript.

Working for the National Theatre for the past four years has ended such slacking, since it requires notice of plays months ahead. Mr Ayckbourn was forced to imagine he had a deadline in October for the play produced the next year.

He considers directing to be the reward for the slog of writing, which he can cope with only for short periods.

"To hold eight people in your mind, with distinctive characters and voices, for more than a week is very hard. It begins to send you slightly barmy. I don't put down that a man has a neurotic mother, but I've got it in my head, and I'm holding on to all these characters with some crazy sense of splitting

my personality quite radically."

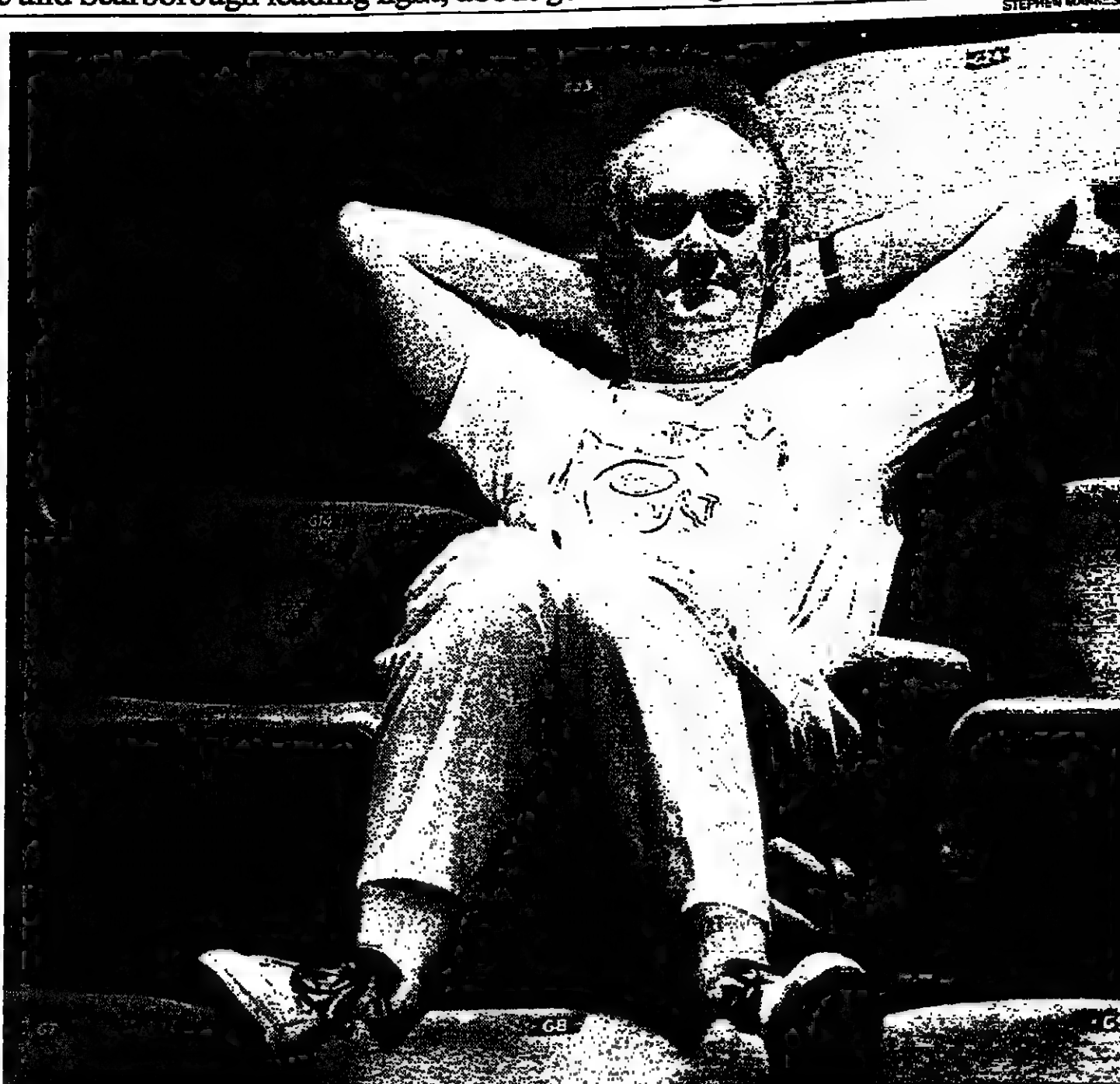
The Ayckbourn personality must have a lot of female in it, since his women characters are very well observed. He was brought up mainly by his mother, a writer of romantic fiction for magazines, who was obviously important to him. She used to drag him along to work, and leave him sitting in the foyer of *Woman's Own* watching these enormously tall women going past. They all seemed to be massive. "His stepfather, a bank manager, was of little interest to him in real life, but has been well utilised in his plays."

Mr Ayckbourn went to a boarding school originally set up by the East India Company at Halkybury, Hertfordshire, where he got very interested in women. "They were off the syllabus for so many years one got incredibly curious about them." He pauses to

giggle. "I married the second one I met just to find out what they were like." His marriage resulted in two children, separation, but not acrimony. For the last 20 years he has lived with the actress Heather Storey, writing about claustrophobia in others' marriages, while avoiding the institution himself.

His major obsession has been politics of the sexual rather than party kind, often seen from the female point of view. "The women must be part of me, dressed in convenient hand-me-down bodies. If you're writing from the heart it can only come out of you, not from observing others." He leans forward, half serious, from his seat in the middle row of the empty theatre. "Besides, I have the sum of all human faults in my character, so it is very easy to find material."

Ageing ungracefully: Alan Ayckbourn's San Francisco 49ers T-shirt and trainers are clues to the amount of energy he expends directing



Palace at home with the range

JUST inside the entrance to the newly re-created Tudor kitchens at Hampton Court there is a locked wooden door. The butchery is opposite, its somewhat sensational stuffed animals, including a deer culled from the Hampton Court herd, lying as if newly slaughtered, their blood splashed around the white-washed walls. Next door, real herbs are scattered in great bunches across a dresser and line the bottom of a genuine, period mortar. But behind the locked wooden door, the relics of a different, more genteel world linger.

The door gives directly on to a narrow staircase, its balustrade intact apart from the bottom newel post. The stairs lead to a series of empty rooms that seem poky in comparison with the lofty spaces of the great kitchens nearby. Cast iron Victorian fireplaces and wall-paper of the Sixties, with an eye-catching pattern of swags of unpleasantly realistic ivy, betray the history of the rooms. Until recently these were "grace-and-favour" apartments. Hampton Court, begun by Cardinal Wolsey in 1514, extended by Henry VIII from 1529 and subsequently by Sir Christopher Wren for William and Mary, from 1689, is still a royal palace.

Other grace-and-favour apartments around the palace's many courtyards are still occupied and until 1978 the great kitchens themselves were apartments. The entrance, now the butchery and the boiling house, was once the hall of an apartment.

The question for Simon Thurley, the Historic Royal Palaces Agency's curator, and his team was how far to strip back the historical evidence of at least two centuries of occupation, to reveal the Tudor kitchens.

The kitchens were made up of about 30 rooms, with a total floor area of 36,000 sq ft. The grace-and-favour room divisions did not necessarily correspond to those of the kitchens, however. Mr Thurley's job was made easier by the fact that in 1978 a predecessor had stripped out

Parts of Hampton Court's re-created Tudor kitchens are surprisingly modern

several floors of apartments and loaded them into a skip, 18th century panelling and all. It was partly to prevent such outright losses that the Historic Royal Palaces Agency was created in 1989.

In any case, conservation theory has moved on since 1978, and the principle governing the recreation of the kitchens was that evidence of subsequent uses of the rooms should be left visible, and that no changes that were made should be irreversible. So the room divisions in the entrance area correspond more nearly



The Tudor butchery

to the grace-and-favour period than the Tudor one; the white-washed walls in the butchery are plasterboard covering an intact Victorian fireplace; and the missing bottom newel post is in safekeeping, should the hidden staircase ever be returned to view.

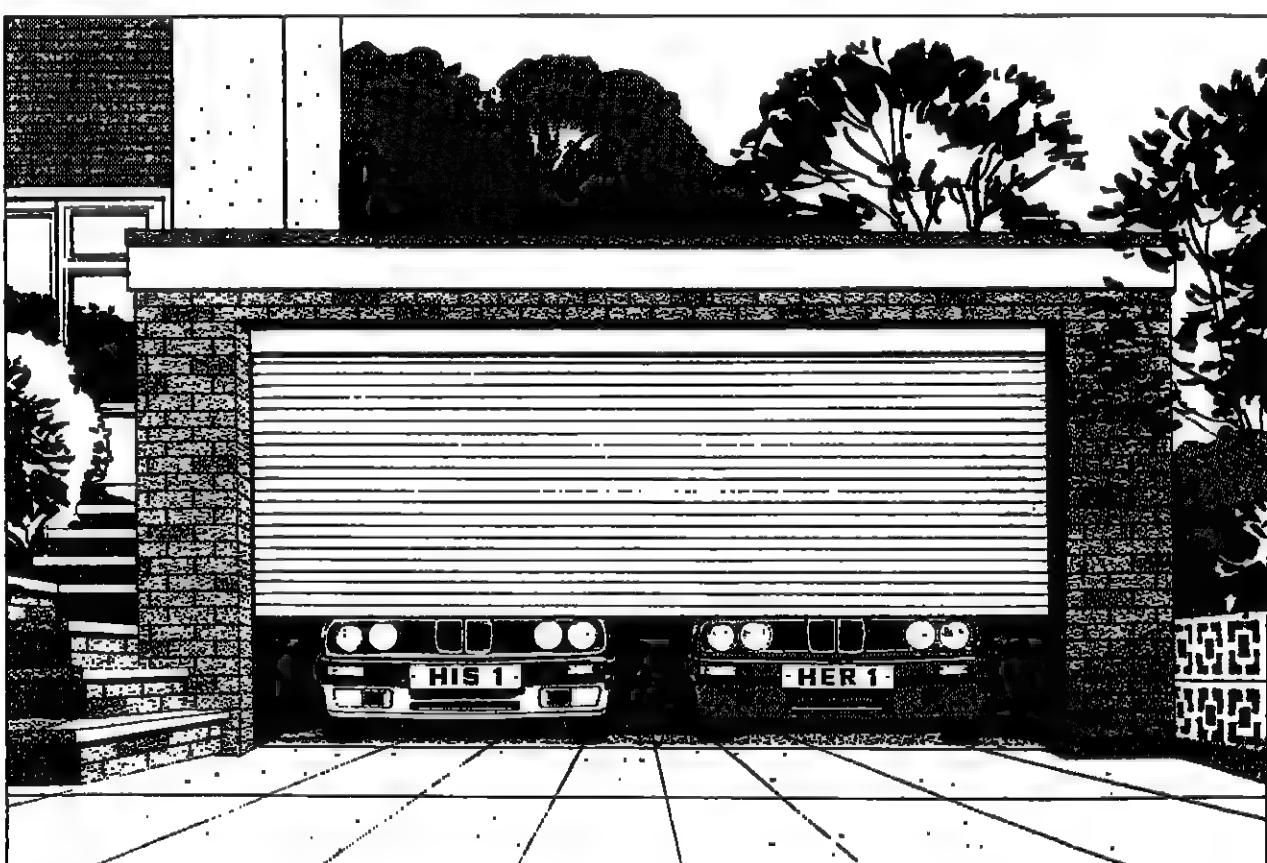
Likewise, a Victorian range that once stood in the kitchen of Lady Baden-Powell, grace-and-favour resident and the widow of the founder of the Boy Scout movement, has been left where it was, occupying, somewhat curiously, the centre of a giant Tudor fireplace.

What will casual visitors make of such anachronisms when the kitchens are officially opened to the public tomorrow? The answer, strangely, is that probably they will hardly be noticed. The restoration team's two aims of authenticity, and bringing back life into the kitchens, mean that the overall impression is as robustly "original" as anyone could wish. A real wood fire crackles beneath a cauldron, the spit is turned by a 17th century clockwork mechanism, and genuine 16th and 17th century knives and pewter plates lie all about. In such an environment, who is going to tap the walls to see if they are solid?

Upstairs, in the empty apartment which originally would have housed kitchen staff, a part of the floorboards has been removed. Underneath, Tudor floorboards have been revealed. When the rooms were

converted at least two centuries ago, new joists were simply laid on top, at right angles to the existing ones, according to Mr Thurley. "These are some of the very few floorboards left in the palace that Henry VIII might actually have walked on," he says. Perhaps the restorers' principle of doing nothing that is irreversible is not so new, after all.

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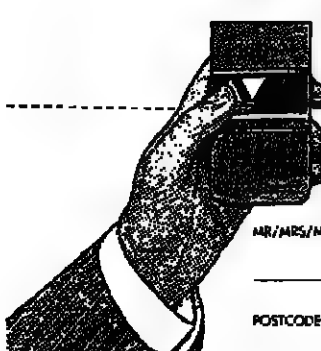
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Maximalism?

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METROPOLITAN HOME

THE INSIDE STORY

سكوا من الاصل

RECORDS: ROCK

Snappy crackle of electropop

Electronic: Electronic (Factory FACT 250)
Soft Cell/Marc Almond: Memorabilia - The Singles (Mercury 848512-2)
De La Soul: De La Soul Is Dead (Big Life BLR LP8)

ALTHOUGH by no means an obvious pairing, the alliance between New Order vocalist Bernard Sumner and former Smiths guitarist Johnny Marr is one of the driving forces of modern pop. Calling themselves Electronic, the duo follows up two enthralling hit singles, "Getting Away With It" and "Get the Message", with an eponymous debut album of similar polish and distinction.

Since emerging relatively unscathed from the wreckage of the Smiths, Marr has functioned as a rather charming, loon-like figure, happily contributing to groups as disparate as the Pretenders and The Verve, without quite stamping his own mark on them. Sumner, meanwhile, has seen his way, world-weary voice invested with ever-greater authority as New Order's stature has grown ineluctably over the course of the Eighties.

Not surprisingly then, it is the technological poise and club-rock grooves with which New Order is associated that tend to dominate in songs such as "Idiot Country" and "Reality", although there is a distinctly Smithsonian tilt to "Tighten Up", where Marr bashes an acoustic guitar with typical fervour.

But most of all, Electronic sounds like a hipper version of the Pet Shop Boys, an impression confirmed by the guest appearance of none other than Neil Tennant and Chris Lowe on "The Patience of a Saint". With its fey

lyrics, infuriatingly catchy chorus and a drum-sound like raindrops falling on a paper bag, this is classic electropop. One of the prime movers in the initial revolution that took a goodly slice of pop away from the men with guitars and gave it to the boys with synthesizers was Marc Almond. Ten years after his duo Soft Cell enjoyed a No 1 hit with "Tainted Love", Mercury records has issued *Memorabilia*, which is a compilation of Almond's most successful singles, both with and without Soft Cell.

Although Almond's coquettish mannerisms and Soft Cell's tiny sound were initially hard to swallow, it is remarkable how durable many of these (now re-mixed) songs have turned out to be. "Say Hello, Wave Goodbye", "Torch" and "What" sound as vigorous as they ever did, while re-interpretations of older material such as "I Feel Love" (with Bronski Beat) and the epic "Something's Gotten Hold of my Heart" (with Gene Pitney) retain the timeless quality that made them such big hits in the first place.

Much energy has been expended in trying to tease out the meaning of De La Soul's latest opus, *De La Soul Is Dead*, but to little avail. As an idiosyncratic counterweight to the macho broadcasting that besets much of rap, the album has its share of delightful moments. But there is a whiff of self-indulgence in the air as sizeable chunks of it are given over to American radio advertisements, interspersed with scratchy old soul records, answerphone messages, hysterical giggling and insane piano bashing.

DAVID SINCLAIR

Stavia Wonder breezed in to London earlier this week, after helping Spike Lee promote his movie *Jungle Fever* at Cannes. Wonder composed the soundtrack for the film and at an unusual press conference he sat at a mock-up bar chatting with an exceptionally well-informed "barman". Asked about the more extreme attitudes of rap acts such as NWA and Public Enemy (who supplied the music for Lee's *Do the Right Thing*) Wonder genially suggested that "some of it's a joke and some of it's too tacky to think of". Later he announced that he will not after all be running for mayor of Detroit. "God hasn't given me the feeling that I should get into that," he explained. "My platform is my songs." *Music From the Movie Jungle Fever* is released on Tuesday.

The Heineken Music Big Top, a travelling festival, presents four days of music at Wollaton Park, Nottingham, from today until Monday. Acts featured include Squeeze (tonight), Martin Stephenson & the Delirious (tomorrow), Allie Ross Kavama (Sunday) and Whyelife (Monday). Admission is free, information line: 0898 222 459.

Legacy Pop, the Sisters of Mercy and James are the big names announced for this year's Reading Festival which takes place as usual over the August Bank Holiday (August 23-25). Also appearing are Sonic Youth, The Fall, De La Soul and others. Tickets are £40 for the weekend, including camping and car parking. Information: 0272 299008. Credit cards: 061-963 2474.

Galleries: Ana Maria Pacheco and two other women sculptors reviewed by John Russell Taylor

Fear on the menu at the carvery



Man-as-meat? Ana Maria Pacheco's sculpture group *The Banquet* (which is seen here being installed at the Camden Arts Centre) has disturbing overtones of the Last Supper

If background counts, and it does, it can hardly be surprising that nearly all the images in Ana Maria Pacheco's sculptures, paintings and drawings have horror and violence lurking just beneath the surface. Such things can also be found in the work of British-born artists, of course. But for all the years Pacheco has spent here, her art seems still more redolent of the Brazil she left than the Britain in which she lives.

Yet Pacheco's art is not directly political: in that, probably, lies its strength. And maybe a degree of distance from South America was necessary before she was able to abstract the emotion and generalise or symbolise the facts of torture and sadistic fanaticism to produce art at once so terrifying and so pure.

The show at the Camden Arts Centre is the big retrospective that has been needed for a decade now. Her latest sculptural group, *Man and his Sheep*, toured the country (without coming to London) last year, surrounded by related prints, drawings and sculptural studies, but this is the first time that the four major sculptures have been brought together. The effect is breathtaking. All of these groups are carved in wood, then painted or coloured in some other way; again, the prevalence of this medium in native Brazilian sculpture, sophisticated as well as naive, must be relevant. But conveying the precise quality of these pieces is difficult, since the horrors are never quite on the surface, coming rather from the strange, menacing atmosphere that

seems to be surrounding them.

In the earliest, *Some Exercise of Power*, two of her strange no-neck monster-men look down almost gleefully at a supine, naked figure of a man with mouth open and eyes closed. There is no overt indication of torture, but the overtones are unavoidable. The title *Acrobats* seems a fair description of the two men in circus costume suspended from a bar by their ankles - except that an association with carousels of meat hanging in a cold-store forces itself on the spectator. These surely cannot be happy acrobats.

The man-as-meat implication is even more potent in the next piece, *The Banquet*, in which a group of seated, clothed people look with satisfaction - or can it be happy anticipation? - at another nude man, this time prone and looking up in something that might be supplication. There are disturbing overtones here of the Last Supper, which disturbingly recall that this, too, was also a kind of symbolic cannibal feast. In a world where cannibalism is usually regarded as a subject for black comedy, this brings us disquietingly near the real thing.

Finally, *Man and his Sheep* evokes a scene from some primitive festival. If it is Dionysian, as in Szymanowski's opera *King Roger*, it belongs to a much darker side of the cult. There are also suggestions of John the Baptist emerging from the desert: the sculpture's propheti-

cal gesture carries a strange ram's-head totem-pole, and is followed by a group of black-garbed peasant women with real teeth, sharp enough to inflict more than token damage.

So what are all these sculptures about? Almost anything the viewer cares to interpret them as, provided it is not comfortable or comforting. One thing is clear: they have their roots in the master aspects of the world we live in. Around them hangs a selection of Pacheco's prints and drawings, few without some incidental socio-masochistic detail, such as the wearing of constrictive masks or the apparent sewing together of lips. There are also several

applications well beyond the scope of the traditional interpretations.

Two other sculptors who are often compared are concurrently receiving important shows of recent work. At the Yorkshire Sculpture Park Sophie Ryder is given what amounts to a first retrospective, and at the Watermans Arts Centre in Brentford Nicola Hicks is featured in the second of a programme of shows that Angela Flowers, a commercial gallery, is arranging and subsidising in partnership with this normally non-commercial space.

The two sculptors have several things in common. Most obviously, they both deal almost entirely in animal images, in sculptures, drawings and prints. They both attracted attention initially by the boldness and originality of their choice and handling of materials. Now both, possibly from the commercial desirability of being able to make editions of their works, have taken up the more conventional medium of bronze, with, in

even a photograph of live lambs nuzzling optimistically at wire fences. Such a degree of naturalism might seem self-defeating, but the fascination comes from the strength of the illusion, even if one is aware of the artifice that has achieved it.

Ryder, too, has a darker side: some of her works have disturbing sexual overtones. Those in *Pink Lady Dancing with Big Brown Hare*, for example, are rather different from the frankly sexual images of horses mating. Compared with the wire pieces, the bronzes, though effective, are rather clunky.

The same could be said of Nicola Hicks's work: in bronze the animals become somehow less attention-catching, more like the acceptable but somehow uninspiring bronze animals of Elizabeth Frink. But when, as in *Sand Dream I* (the large kangaroo in painted plaster and straw that dominates the show at Watermans), she returns to the more dangerous, perishable materials in which she first made her name, the results are unique.

The horrors are never quite on the surface, coming rather from the atmosphere that seems to surround them

recent drawings, which seem to develop out of the John the Baptist view of *Man and his Sheep*, bringing together the scattered aspects of prophet and severed head to reach, logically, the story of Salome. These seem to be preparation for Pacheco's next major work, a cycle of large paintings on the subject of Salome and the decapitation of John the Baptist. What, in some, might seem merely traditionally decadent, in Pacheco promises

both cases, more conventional results. Sophie Ryder began by making three-dimensional cartoons out of free-hanging wire. Then with *Bear's Head* in 1981 she hit on her true form by weaving and knotting the shape, still out of wire. Most of her familiar pieces are life-sized animals of amazing life-likeness, all made out of wire entanglements.

Here, the largest recent piece in this form is *Flock of Sheep*, which is so incredibly realistic that there is

Ana Maria Pacheco. Camden Arts Centre, Arkwright Road, NW3 071-435 2643. Tues-Thurs midday-6pm, Fri-Sun midday-6pm, until July 7.

Sophie Ryder. Yorkshire Sculpture Park, Bretton Hall College, West Bretton, Wakefield, West Yorkshire (0924-830579). Daily 10am-6pm, until August 26.

Nicola Hicks. Watermans Arts Centre, 40 High Street, Brentford, Middlesex (081-847 5651). Mon-Sat 11am-8.30pm, Sun midday-6pm, until June 16.

CLASSICAL MUSIC

Double Dutch treat is acoustic delight

The new Symphony Hall in Birmingham is evidently a versatile machine. This week the Royal Concertgebouw, conducted by Riccardo Chailly, was its first major visiting orchestra, and it revealed a quite different sound-room from the one opened last month by the City of Birmingham Symphony Orchestra. There was none of the spectacular pianissimo achieved then, but this programme did not call for such extremes.

What it did exhibit was the ballooning reverberation that is possible, without any loss of clarity, by positioning of the canopy over the musicians is obviously crucial. In Haydn's "Travis" Symphony the effect was untoward: echoes of several seconds rolled like dust clouds after sharp attacks, and

with a church-like coolness surrounded what is essentially chamber music, giving rather the impression of a very much smaller audience than in fact was present. But the sounds of Schoenberg's Opus 16 pieces, especially the magical blendings of the middle study, were at home in this enveloping space. And the long resonance gave a celebratory, outdoor air to Schumann's Second Symphony.

The Haydn and the Schumann also indicated what this orchestra has picked up from the period-style movement, perhaps from working with such conductors as Nikolaus Harnoncourt and Frans Brüggen. The strings used vibrato delicately, which produced a refreshing, icy zest when coupled with Chailly's admirably unforced but decisive forward

motion (largely achieved by letting the counterpoint sing out clearly). In the rhythmically tricky Schumann scherzo, particularly, the clean feel was a tonic. It was also good to hear natural-sounding flute and oboe solos in this piece.

The pleasure of the Schoenberg performance was in the confident placing of everything, the conviction that every sound in the score can be beautiful. Chailly and the Concertgebouw move on to the Baroque, where they are to play Bruckner's Fifth Symphony this evening.

In exchange, Amsterdam will be receiving the London Philharmonic next week, conducted by the Concertgebouw's chief, Bernard Haitink, in Mahler's Seventh Symphony, which they performed earlier this week in the Festival Hall. Haitink's sense of the way this music moves is majestically secure, even in the first movement, which he made seem an unlikely but just-stable house of cards built out of balancing misalliances.

Grand, steaming but ramshackle, this beginning opened the way for the controlled oddities Haitink unleashed in the middle movements. A note in the pocket scherzo asserts that the central scherzo "has none of the ghostly characteristics of other Mahler scherzos", and describes it as "a droll dance". Haitink found differently.

The piece was full of outrages and ugliness, but they were carefully judged to their context. Then in the finale, where any performance faces the problem that the work has spread so far that resolution is impossible, Haitink's firm, disciplined torrent came near persuading one that wholeness had been accomplished.

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Ferocious dogs are spreading fear on the streets. But to deal with them we must root out a yobbish subculture, says Janet Daley

Will no one say the unsayable about the vicious dog? All the column inches and air time devoted to whether the animals or their owners are at fault have been remarkably euphemistic. A few broad hints have been dropped in the form of profiles of typical pit-bull fanciers, but no one seems prepared to utter the truth about this cult.

The function these dogs serve in the street culture of the inner cities has little to do with the traditional British conception of the beloved family pet. Dog lovers in the shires, now raising their voices against the mass slaughtering of many blameless animals, are likely to be quite naïve about this urban fashion.

Not to mince words, in many working-class areas the most notorious breeds of fighting dog have become part of a panoply of deliberate terror. They are used exhibitionistically both as weapons and as talismans of threat. Alsatians used to serve this purpose but they have been superseded by the more spectacular imports, the pos-

session of which has now become emblematic of "street cred" in the desolate no-go areas of Britain's worst council estates.

Walking the streets at all has become a gesture of bravado in the most dangerous inner city areas. Benign pedestrian life as it was known until the Fifties has virtually disappeared as a part of urban experience. The redesign of working-class neighbourhoods into concrete wastelands, combined with the car culture which depopulates the pavements after dark, makes walkways and open spaces adventure playgrounds for roving delinquents.

A gang of noisily aggressive youths promenading with their consort of dogs is as terrifying a vision as city life has to offer. The prospect of such encounters keeps the residents of many neighbourhoods and estates confined to their barricaded homes. What was

Tackle this panoply of terror



Canine armoury: we must remove the threat without giving vicious dogs an illicit glamour

left of wholesome working-class street life is being terrorised into oblivion by yob culture. And the fashion for fighting dogs is one of its most effective accoutrements.

Getting rid of the dogs would be tantamount to disarming a myriad of private armies, which would be a good thing in itself. But if banning these breeds and threat-

ening them with annihilation resulted in their becoming gloriously illicit, there would be little improvement in the lives of those who now feel threatened. How many neighbours would dare to report an illegally kept dog, knowing the reprisals likely to follow? There is a danger that the forbidden dog had would go

underground, like video nasties, and become even more symbolic of delinquent solidarity.

Whatever short-term policy is pursued on this issue, it offers an opportunity to have a hard look at what is festering in the most deprived and brutalised corners of our cities which should not be missed. We cannot grapple with

the reality of gratuitous violence, a subculture obsessed with sexual sadism, and the takeover of the streets by juvenile thugs (with or without their canine armoury) if we look at each aspect in isolation as it surfaces.

Talk about whether legal pressure can be put on owners to appreciate the dangers and behave more "responsibly" is typical of the cant that arises from a failure to address the pattern as a whole. These dogs are not bought thoughtlessly. They are prized precisely because they invoke terror. Deprived of them (as they certainly should be by one means or another), their owners will find alternative means of striking fear into their neighbours.

Politicians and pundits engage in endless discussion about the inner cities without directly confronting the inbred degradation which is destroying the

quality of life at their heart. Labour's glossy, market-researched document on London, released this week, scarcely touches on the subject of sink council estates and the bizarre tribal rites that their social isolation encourages. This may reflect an embarrassed recognition that socialist public housing policy must take a good deal of the historical credit for this horror.

To be fair, the early paternalists could not have envisaged that segregation by class, especially when accompanied by authoritarian directives, would have such a devastating effect on self-esteem. Now we know. The destruction by social engineering of a self-respecting, self-controlling community life was the critical mistake of post-war politics. The real challenge of the urban future is how to break this cycle of bravura machismo, which is reinforced by the coercive social pressure of the streets, now emptied of almost every morally healthy constraining influence. Coming to terms with it will require more than the destruction of dangerous dogs.

Philip Howard

Prejudice is more than a word

Sexual and racial harassment have always gone on at work, as well as non-specific varieties of bullying. But now we are more aware of them, and less inclined to find them amusing. The world has improved in the past century in that racism and sexism and ageism and the rest of them are widely perceived as offensive rather than natural. Of course the world is still full of prejudice against other people. You do not change human nature and human ignorance by the whim of the high-minded. But at least most people who make blatantly sexist or racist remarks today are aware that somebody might object, and make their remarks defiantly or sotto voce or slyly. We have taken a step down the road to recognising that a man's a man for a' that, whatever his colour and race, and even if he is a woman.

There is a danger that we are pitying the plumage but forgetting the dying bird. We are so zealous to detect the notes of discrimination in our language that we neglect the real discrimination that exists in the cities and workplaces and boardrooms.

Words are as slippery as a creel of fresh mackerel. Some American blacks now want to be called blacks, as a matter of racial pride, a word that has replaced the term Afro-American, which replaced negroes, which replaced coloured, which replaced darkeys, which replaced blacks. Some New York homosexuals want to revert to being called queer, instead of the more cheerful and neutral gay. But you cannot cure the sins of the world by sanitising the language. In these times of linguistic police, it is dangerous even to open one's mouth or punch a key on the VDU. The Multicultural Management Program Fellows, a press-gang or group of American journalists, have published a *Dictionary of Cautious Words and Phrases*, intended to help us to write prose with no offence in it.

Some of the advice is perfectly sensible. Woman is the preferred term for a female adult. Girl is appropriate only for those 17 years old and under. Avoid derogatory terms for women, such as skirt,

broad, chick, bimbo, bumbo, babe, ball and chain, and little woman.

There is the same sensitivity about racial stereotypes. "Avoid any word, description, or phrase that contributes to the stereotypes of black males as strictly athletic, well proportioned, or having high sexual drives and exaggerated sex organs." As for the old: "Do not use senior citizen for anyone under 65. In general, avoid ageism by giving ages only where relevant." Do not use dirty old man, codger, coot, geezer, silver fox, old-timer, Pop, old buzzard. Blue-haired or blue-ribose brigade is objectionable when used to characterise old people."

Much of this is good manners and common sense, but some of the words now being labelled as racist or offensive fall over the edge into absurdity. It is now deemed abusive to talk about a Dutch treat or going Dutch, because this might suggest that the Dutch are stingy (quite the reverse, in my experience). This usage goes back to the English wars with the Dutch, like Dutch courage, Dutch nightgales (frogs), and a Dutch concert (a hullabaloo). Dear is apparently objectionable as a term of endearment, which is bad news for those of us who use dear boy and dear girl as substitutes while we search our memories for names lost in the mists of myopia. Beefcake and burly are offensive epithets for men, implying that they are thick, and strident feminists don't like being called baracades. Come to notice it, "strident" is a word used to put women in their place.

There is no cure to human prejudice in reforming the language. It is attitudes that make the language offensive. The fault, dear Brutus, is not in our words, but in our attitudes. Arthur Ashe was addressing the Association of Tennis Professionals, and paused to search for the right word to describe a controversial new rule. "Come on, Arthur," came a voice from the floor, "don't be afraid to call a spade a spade." And Ashe and his friends fell about laughing, because there was no offence in the offensive word.

Lloyd's goes up the spout

Bernard Levin deplores the shortsighted chutzpah of the insurance 'names' who close their eyes and jump



Association I would do the job by stealth, and blush to find it fame, said that the government's refusal to comply with the *chutzpah* (adjective form) claim was "very regrettable", and he added: "I believe it will do great long-term damage to London's standing in international financial markets."

I should damned well hope so; if losing half a billion through nothing but stupendous incompetence doesn't damage London's international financial markets, what will? Or did the banks suppose that the municipal clowns playing Monopoly would provide a profit? But this leads me to Lloyd's, where, instead of *ringing* the Lutine Bell, they are seeking, as yet unsuccessfully, a pawnbroker's soft-hearted enough to give them a fiver on it till pay day.

There was a number of massive frauds at Lloyd's some years back; it got so serious that legislation was required to tidy the place up.

But if tidying up was the worst problem Lloyd's faced today, there would be marzipan on every doorknob in the building. No, when our Sunday sister comes out with two separate detailed predictions of collapse, one headed "Lloyd's must reform or die" and the other "Thousands risk ruin as disasters hit Lloyd's", it is time to show a face of concern or rub our hands with glee, whichever shall seem the more appropriate.

It is the old story that runs through so many of Britain's activities: soulmate leaders, promoted beyond their ability, fail to notice that the nature of the trade has changed. Take a tiny but representative phrase, from the *Sunday Times* coverage of the Lloyd's story: "Born out of Britain's dominance of the world's oceans, Lloyd's has never adjusted to the decline of the merchant fleet, and to the huge shifts that have occurred in the insurance market."

If that is what has happened, it is not surprising that an expert in these matters said Lloyd's "is beyond redemption, killed by changing markets, competition and the incompetence of the people who run it". Move on to the evidence; there are "Names" (which is what members of Lloyd's syndicates are called), in one syndicate, each of whom has £30,000 staked, and each of whom may shortly be asked - politely, I am sure - for £750,000, to pay a claim. Another such syndicate, with 570 members, faces a loss of £80 million; a moment with a calculator reveals that every member could be asked to divvy up £140,000. It seems that Lloyd's annual losses for the most recent accounts will come to some £150 million, at which you may gasp. Gasp on; the figure predicted for the following year's deficit is a cool billion.

So what happened? Three things: two old and one new. For

one of the two familiar horrors we need look no further than the goings-on at Lloyd's over the Feltrim syndicates, in which the Names (there are 2,000 of them) have committed themselves, to their surprise and dismay, to paying out £320 million from assets amounting to roughly one-fifth of that sum. The Council of Lloyd's has just agreed to bolt the door on horses which have long ago fled, leaving no forwarding address. Lloyd's is to set up a special investigation to enquire into the hitherto unsuspected news that twice two makes a sum almost exactly halfway between three and five.

Nobody, it seems, heard the whole caboodle going glug-glug-glug; nor did anyone notice that the principle of unlimited liability (on which Lloyd's has always rested) is, in modern conditions, a highway to inevitable disaster. (That reminds me: the Federation of Insurers, specialised in "catastrophe reinsurance") The trouble, as far as I can see, is that Lloyd's assumed that the worst possible claim would be a joint one consisting of the simultaneous sinking of the Queen Mary and the burning down of the Mansion House. Neither of these shocking events took place, but Lloyd's failed to notice, amid the toasts to these notable structures, that the Savings and Loans scheme in the United States had collapsed, leaving Lloyd's with a claim of two and a half billion pounds.

Columbus discovered America and Lloyd's mislaid it. Vast claims for pollution damage have been pouring in from across the Atlantic; my expert says that over the next 20 years claims concerning pollution and allied matters may climb as high as \$100 billion. Bad luck, fellows. But how much of it was bad luck, and how much complicity? I return to the words of the source who broke the story to *The Sunday Times*: "Everyone in Lloyd's is in despair," he said; "The place is fundamentally bust, and unless it changes it won't exist in five years."

"Lloyd's must reform or die", said the headline which started me off. As one who regards Lloyd's as an elegant form of gambling, I must say I don't greatly mind which course is finally chosen. Anyway, why not both?

...and moreover

ALAN COREN

Regret percolated the voice of James Smith & Sons. Not of all of them, only of the members who answer the telephone to enquirers after swordsticks, but I have little doubt that he spoke for the entire family.

Whether that regret was the craftsman's or the businessman's, I could not say, but it was very likely compounded of both. If you have been knocking out bespoke concealed weapons to the carriage trade since 1830 and the Home Office suddenly sends you a note telling you to pack it in, what upper lip, however professionally stiff, could forbear to tremble?

"We have not," said the Smith, "been allowed to manufacture or supply swordsticks since 1988. I'm most awfully sorry, sir."

Me too. Up until that moment, I had been congratulating myself on a brilliant solution to our present problems. It had suddenly come to me at Monday lunchtime, and it had brought with it a simultaneous recollection of that beautifully calligraphed New Oxford Street facade, where the extravagant Victorian curlicues boasting the manufacture of every conceivable stick and umbrella do not merely advertise a service, but conjure up glowing lantern slides to the plangent plunk of barrel organs. The mere word "swordstick" is enough to put a dark alley in the head, and a tall toppered cove in the alley, and a monocle in his eye, and a cane swinging in his hand as he hurries to

wards his tryst at the Gaiety's stage-door, and suddenly, upon the brick wall, the moon throws the shadow of a footpad's upswung knobkerrie, and the tall cove wheels and flicks his hand, and this time the moonlight does its stuff along the rapier blade.

Just the job for Clutterhouse Park, I thought last Monday. Ticket-boob for Hampstead Heath. *De rigueur* for Primrose Hill, and all those other greenfield sites where I took the constitutional plops about which I had been growing daily more dubious and upon which Monday's *One O'Clock News* had put the tin lid.

"There is not much you can do," said the RSPCA man, "except wear fortified leather sleeves and heavy boots, attempt to get the dog to lock its jaws on your arm, and then drag it where you can get help. You might also carry a small metal bar to prise its jaws apart. Then try to get a wall between you and the dog, or climb a tree, or..."

He then went on to talk about third party insurance, which is where he lost me. The picture of myself standing in Clutterhouse Park with a pit-bull depending from my seeping forearm while I exchanged policy details with a bloke in a studded collar was even more nerve-racking than the ones of me dragging a wall between myself and a doberman, shinning up a tree in my new heavy boots, or trying to insinuate a spanner between the molars of a feral rottweiler.

Before the current crisis, I had, like most urban strollers, given less thought to what dogs might do than to what they had already done. In fact, the heavy boot was the one item I avoided wearing, since there is little to less look forward to than coming home from the park and chiselling its detritus out of rutted soles and heels. That apart, I like dogs, and rather enjoy it when they take me for a kindred spirit and bound up to me for a spot of fun. However, the growing risk that what they are bounding up to me for is a spot of lunch has changed all that. Recently, I have been carrying a walking-stick, and had felt fairly secure until the RSPCA man said that it was useless: you could flail at a clamped pit-bull till Doomsday, but it would not let go until it had sorted out that doom to its own satisfaction. It was even as I took this on board that it came to me that there were walking-sticks and there were walking-sticks. What I needed was a fortified whangee, which, at the first sign of an hors d'oeuvre forearm, could be unsheathed and stuck where it would do most good.

But the Home Secretary will not allow it. What could I do until what he does allow starts to take effect? It probably won't have. I put this to the Smith. "We could sell you an alpenstock," he suggested. "It has a pointed steel ferrule."

"Is it sharp enough?" I enquired.

Did you know you can hear discreet smiles on telephones?

"I'm sure something could be arranged," he said.

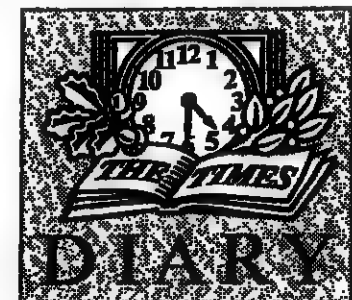
One more week's interest

The restoration of diplomatic links between Albania and Britain, announced this week, was almost scuppered by a furious row between the Treasury and the foreign office over the question of Albanian gold in the Bank of England. The reconciliation between the two countries after a rift of almost half a century was due to be announced with a great fanfare earlier this month when the Albanian prime minister, Fatos Nano, and foreign minister Muhamed Kapellari were in London for talks with the European Bank, but neither party had anticipated the intransigence of the Treasury, in the shape of chief secretary David Mellor.

As part of the carefully negotiated diplomatic deal, Albania had agreed to drop its longstanding demand that Britain return £18 million of gold languishing in the Bank of England's reserves. Britain had retained the gold as a bargaining counter for compensation for the British lives lost when two navy destroyers were sunk by mines in the Corfu Channel in 1946.

The junior foreign office minister Douglas Hogg was delighted with the Albanian change of heart, and pencilled in Monday of last week for the ceremony. But with the foreign secretary Douglas Hurd out of the country, Treasury hardliners, led by Mellor, had other ideas. Pulling rank on Hogg, Mellor insisted on compensation before the agreement was signed. So the announcement was delayed and the ceremony cancelled.

When Hurd returned, however, he was furious that the Treasury had attempted to override his decision, and the Treasury in turn was overruled: hence this week's announcement.



● *Skipping is not a sport, and that's official.* For 25 years Albert Rayment (world record holder with 128 skips in 10 seconds) has campaigned to have it recognised as such. Now the Sports Council has ruled that skipping is merely "an aid to fitness" rather than a sporting activity in its own right. But Britain is out of step: millions of Japanese belong to skipping clubs, and America has suggested that skipping be included in the Olympic Games.

Show of spoils

The Imperial War Museum has presented the Ministry of Defence with a shopping list of items for a planned Gulf war display. Next month the museum will mount its first exhibition since the war, consisting of a collection of previously unseen photographs of the conflict by photographer Mike Moore.

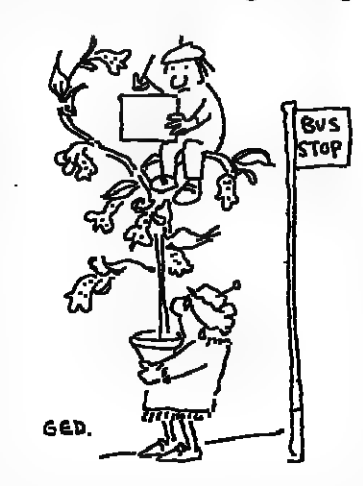
However, few of the other items that the museum had hoped to be offered for its permanent display by Gulf veterans have materialised. General Sir Peter de la Billiere has donated his desert uniform, John Major has given the captured Iraqi Kalashnikov which was presented to him, and the Israeli civil defence authorities have provided some gas masks. The response is described as "patchy" by Dr Christopher Dowling of the museum. "We have a Desert Storm valentine card sent by a soldier to his wife

in Germany," he adds, as an example of the kind of material they are after.

Its director, Dr Alan Borg, has asked the ministry for items of captured Iraqi equipment, including a tank, artillery pieces and uniforms. The ministry has had similar requests from other institutions, but so much Iraqi equipment was captured that curators are optimistic that all their demands can be met. Only the battle in the air is likely to present problems when it comes to museum exhibits. "We may have to make do with some Scud fragments from Israel," says Dowling.

Last blooms

When the peonies and perennials are packed up when the Chelsea Flower Show ends today, one permanent record of its splendours will remain: a meticulous botanical illustration of this year's prize-winning orchid. Even in this high-tech age,



the artistry of brush and pen is satisfyingly superior to the camera when it comes to capturing the beauty of a prize bloom. The Royal Horticultural Society's official illustrator, Cherry-Anne

Levrih, has been at Chelsea this week drawing the orchids, which have become an RHS speciality. Across London, Kew Gardens has no fewer than 13 full-time illustrators beavering away. "There's an urgency to our work at Kew," says a spokesman, "because we're working against time to record these species before many of them become extinct."

One more divide

Peter Brooke's talks on the future of Northern Ireland may be making slow progress, but not as slow as the House of Commons standing committee on Northern Ireland which this week managed to hold its first meeting in six years. At its last gathering a junior whip called John Major was among its 42 members.

"Logistical reasons" are cited for the delay in reconvening but even when the committee did finally meet, it was apparently uninterested in Brooke's initiative. Instead it spent the time discussing equal opportunities for Catholics, Protestants and Muslims. Yes, Muslims. To the outrage of both sides of the sectarian divide in the Christian community, a company in John Taylor's Strangford constituency insists on employing only Shias.

● *The curse of Gazza's knee strikes again.* Only days after Gascoigne's Wembley injury, the Tory MP Charles Giddison-Wickes has damaged his anterior cruciate ligament. The Wimbledon MP made the headlines earlier this year as the first MP in 45 years to see active service, with the medical corps in the Gulf. He survived that experience unscathed, but the real tennis court at Lords did for him, and he is about to enter hospital for an NHS operation. He thinks it unlikely that his knee has dropped by anything like £8 million.



PAYING OVER THE TOP

The argument that broke out this week about top people's pay is not a storm in a teacup. If the government's exhortatory incomes policy, often repeated by the prime minister, the Chancellor and the governor of the Bank of England is about anything, it is about fairness. Fairness is indivisible.

Economists studying wealth distribution used to conclude that, short of winning the pools, people in Britain could only become rich through inheritance or personal enterprise. But in the past decade private-sector salaries for top directors have become comparable with those abroad. Chief executives earn 62 per cent more in real terms than they did a decade ago. The pay rise of 16.9 per cent to the governor of the Bank of England last year suggests that the public sector does not intend to be left out.

Robin Leigh-Pemberton's rise was set nearly two years ago, but must make his recent pleas for pay restraint seem hypocritical. He claimed yesterday that the increase to £155,000 was justified as it followed two years of rises averaging 4 per cent. But the year before that, he won a 22.9 per cent increase, when inflation was 5 per cent.

Just as spurious is the comparison between Mr Leigh-Pemberton's salary and that paid to clearing bank chairmen. The governor of the Bank of England makes up in prestige and security what he may lose in salary. A job such as his was once regarded as a mark of the nation's respect. It was undertaken in a spirit of public service, receiving the establishment's customary rewards of peerage, quango membership, college headship and indexed pension. It is simply incredible for the Bank's spokesmen now to imply that nobody will do this job because a salary well over £100,000 implies comparative poverty.

In America, the difference between the private sector and public service is still understood. Alan Greenspan, chairman of the Fed, earns \$75,000, less than half Mr Leigh-Pemberton. He used to earn several million dollars a year in consultancy. Jacques de Larosière, governor of the Bank

of France, earns two-thirds of his British opposite number. Only Karl-Otto Pöhl, of the Bundesbank, earns more (about £200,000). Is this what is meant by monetary convergence?

From both public and private sectors, a whiff of cronyism is emerging. The pay of top managers both at the Bank and in most public companies is determined by "remuneration committees" of non-executive directors. Because they are usually executive directors of other private-sector companies, and are often appointed by the chairman himself, they seem impelled by considerations of loyalty and solidarity to maintain a structure of corporate remuneration that bears little relation to corporate performance or to differentials with staff lower down the hierarchy.

The chairman and chief executive of Rolls Royce last year won rises of 21 and 27 per cent while earnings per share dipped by 35 per cent and employees were being laid off. The chief executive of Royal Insurance (which lost £187 million last year) saw his pay rise by 20 per cent. Directors of Britain's largest companies had pay rises averaging 22.7 per cent, according to the Institute of Management and Remuneration Economics.

These managers do not own their own companies. They are employees. Why are the shareholders not squealing? One reason is that the shareholders are often represented by pension and insurance companies whose own senior staff have proved beneficiaries of the same inflation of directorial salaries. Such rises may have been justified in the 1980s when share prices and profits were rising too. Now those profits are falling, pay should begin to fall as well.

Quis custodiet ipsos custodes? If the big shareholders will not act, then the small shareholder must. They should vote against the re-election of greedy directors. The government, as owner of the Bank of England, could do the same. Shareholders of the world, miter! You have nothing to lose but your overpaid chairman.

SONIA GANDHI'S GOOD SENSE

Sonia Gandhi has discomfited power-brokers in the Congress (I) party by declining to be drafted as its president, an offer they arrogantly believed she could not refuse. She has done India a service in refusing a job for which her only qualification, according to the party's spokesmen, was that "she is a wife in the household of the Gandhi-Nehru family".

Seldom have short-term political calculations been more nakedly expressed. With Sonia as president, her husband's party might well have garnered more of the 306 seats on which voting has been postponed to next month. Her acceptance would have deferred an unifying battle for the party's leadership until after the elections. But precisely because these were too obviously the sole reasons for conscripting her for the job, her acceptance would have done little to rebuild voters' respect for India's increasingly discredited political class.

India has never been in greater need of strong and stable government. The secular ideal, Nehru's most important legacy, is at risk from Hindu fundamentalism. Conflict between castes has been responsible for much of the electoral violence preceding Rajiv Gandhi's assassination. Direct rule from Delhi can offer no long-term answer to separatist insurgencies in Punjab, Assam and Kashmir or to regional resentments elsewhere of the central government's powers. But even an absolute majority for Congress (I) would not have guaranteed firm and imaginative leadership. Nor, the elections over, could the Gandhi name alone have worked magic.

Had Rajiv Gandhi lived, and won outright, he would have found it hard to unite the party behind the difficult new departures in economic policy, and concessions to regional demands for more

autonomy, which have become imperative. His inexperienced widow would have been still more at the mercy of powerful vested interests. A break with the Nehru-Gandhi dynasty may be what it takes to force the factions to unite behind new leadership — and new policies.

The Gandhi-name might have helped unite the secular parties against the Hindu revivalist challenge mounted by the Bharatiya Janata party. But as Rajiv Gandhi himself realised, India needs to break with the two other legacies bequeathed by Nehru: the stifling web of state control over trade, production and employment which lie at the root of corruption in business and public life; and the centralisation of economic decision-making in Delhi.

Without radical reforms on the first front, India cannot hope for clean government, whoever is in power: the system operates by corruption. Without real devolution of power to the states (and to the private sector), India will become ever more ungovernable. For both political and economic reasons, Delhi must shed responsibility.

Economic virtue may be forced upon the new government by the need for fresh foreign loans. India's debt has quadrupled in the past decade, to around \$47 billion, and its foreign exchange reserves have run dry. Money will not be forthcoming until the new government draws up a budget which makes drastic cuts in public spending, including subsidies. That cannot be done without extensive privatisation and deregulation.

Political virtue will be harder to come by: a switch to a looser federal system is against Delhi's political culture. Patronage is deeply embedded. But if Sonia Gandhi holds to her refusal to be associated with the latest and most cynical exercise in patronage, she will have set a principled example.

AMEN TO PATERNOSTER

The latest plans for Paternoster Square in the City of London deserve to succeed. The history of the redevelopment of the site immediately north of St Paul's Cathedral has mirrored the history of postwar British architecture. Heavily bombed in the war, the original street pattern of Georgian and Victorian commercial buildings was replaced with a decked "comprehensive development" by Lord Holford in 1967. Despite being more modest and respectful of pedestrians and visitors than, for instance, the neighbouring Barbican, Holford's group of buildings has never been popular. What should replace it?

Plans five years ago suggested a new development with yet another comprehensive approach. The plan and most of the buildings remained in the Modernist tradition and incurred the wrath of the Prince of Wales, reflecting public aversion to a stylistically exhausted form of urban renewal. Since Paternoster is one of the first big 1960s schemes to come forward for replacement, the outcome is significant for cities across Britain.

An alternative, Classical scheme was put forward in 1987 by the architect John Simpson. This played an important role in showing that the planning process need not be led by the development industry but could choose the styles as well as the uses of buildings in ordering renewal. Simpson's vision was of Georgian facades, arches and shopfronts, with narrow streets and enclosed spaces in the lee of the great cathedral. Both plan and counter-plan proved abortive.

The proposal unveiled yesterday by the

new developers, Greycoat and Park Tower, is clearly based on the Simpson vision (see page 20). The rapprochement between classicism and property development could hardly be more dramatic — or more welcome. With Simpson as masterplanner, a number of modern British and overseas architects have been asked to design individual buildings: Terry Farrell, Robert Adam, Quinlan Terry, Allan Greenberg, Simpson himself. As Sir Norman Foster's original scheme for King's Cross was a museum to the Modernist school on an appropriately open site, so here is a gallery of Classicism in the shadow of one of Europe's most magnificent Renaissance buildings.

While Prince Charles is known to be worried by the density of the proposal — five storeys rising to nine storeys away from the cathedral — it is not overpowering and is splendidly relieved by a piazza and profusion of facades, variations on an overall theme. This is the heart of a modern city and needs to be dense. The development must also pay — the first Simpson scheme was regarded as unviable — and requires costly materials and finishes for its effect.

Britain's notoriously dilatory planning system must not spin out this saga much longer. Delay, public consultation and reconsideration have certainly yielded a vastly improved scheme. There must come a time for decision. This is an exciting addition to London's landscape, a fitting replacement for what was destroyed in the war. The existing Paternoster Square should be written off as an aberration. London can now begin to recover its self-confidence.

Keeping London wheels moving

From Mr Nigel Seymer

Sir, Your proposed "minimalist version of a London authority", which you commend to Mr Heseltine (leading article, May 21) consists of a "single elected mayor plus a senate composed of borough representatives". Its function would be liaising between the boroughs and other bodies, "notably in matters of transport and development planning".

Except for the mayor (which might make all the difference) we already have such a body: the London Boroughs Association (LBA). It has just produced an excellent report on what should be done about global warming, but it lacks the clout of its Washington equivalent, the Council of Governments (COG).

COG is responsible for strategic thinking about transport and development planning. As an example of its influence, it has persuaded the Washington authorities, including the two state governments concerned, of the efficacy of its programme of "demand management" — involving facilitation of car and minibuses and introduction of preferential lanes on radial motorways — as a means of solving traffic problems.

This programme can be regarded as an alternative to road pricing and one that is more egalitarian. And it works. Yet my efforts to get ministers and civil servants to take an interest in it has reminded me of the Duke of Plaza Toro, who "led his regiment from behind" — he found it less exciting.

But over and beyond such methods for better use of roads and motorways, the new authority should develop a genuine policy recognising the link between development and transport demand. Docklands have provided an awful example of the lack of such recognition at the right time.

It seems inevitable that any massive new development in central London such as that planned for the railway lands at King's Cross will exacerbate congestion. Department of Transport planners gave evidence to this effect to the House of Commons committee that handled the relevant bill. So how can that department conscientiously allow that to happen?

Yours faithfully,
NIGEL SEYMER
(Transport planning consultant),
63 Emsay Road, W4,
May 22.

Too young to fight?

From Lord Harvinton

Sir, I read (report, May 17) of a recommendation by a Commons committee that young men under 18 should not be sent on active service overseas.

Jack Cornwell won the VC at Jutland in May 1916 and was the pride of our nation. He was killed in that action. He was sixteen.

Yours faithfully,
HARVINGTON,
House of Lords.

From his Honour Anthony Babington

Sir, Michael Evans's piece, "Glorious past of boy soldiers who went to fight" (May 17), brings to mind the shocking way in which one of them was treated.

In February 1916 a young soldier in a north country regiment was tried by field general court martial in France on two charges of desertion. It emerged at the trial that he had enlisted at the age of 16, pretending that he was 18. He had joined his regiment in the British Expeditionary Force when he was 17 and had deserted after eight months, largely spent on the western front. He was recaptured and escaped from the guardroom for a brief spell of liberty because he had heard that deserters were usually shot.

The court sentenced him to death with a recommendation to mercy "on the grounds of his extreme youth". Sir Douglas Haig, the commander-in-chief, refused to grant a reprieve. The young soldier had his 18th birthday while he was awaiting the pronouncement of the sentence. Two months later he was shot by a firing squad.

Yours faithfully,
ANTHONY BABINGTON,
Thydon Cottage, Chilham,
Canterbury, Kent
May 17.

Rationing nitrogen

From Mr Oliver Walston

Sir, The theory of a nitrogen ration, as proposed by Mr Hugh Oliver-Bellasis (report, May 14, early editions), is superficially attractive. In practice, however, it is unworkable. Not only would each individual farm have to be allocated an arbitrary ration, but imports would also have to be strictly controlled to prevent any surplus finding its way round the system.

Even if the ration books themselves were not transferable, a black market would inevitably develop between hill farmers who found it more profitable to sell nitrogen and arable farmers desperate to increase their fertilisers.

Yet if the problems of enforcing this ration in the UK are difficult, they are simple compared to those

Letters to the editor should carry a daytime telephone number. They may be sent to a fax number — (071) 782 5046.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

1 Pennington Street, London E1 9XN Telephone 071-782 5000

A new vision for public services

From the Deputy General Secretary of the TGWU

Sir, Mr Major's comments during the Monmouth by-election, as well as his recent speeches, have been interpreted as an attempt to steal Labour's clothes, but he is not so much stealing Labour's policies as borrowing their language. He talks about improved quality and accountability, yet his government is committed to maintaining and extending exactly those policies that have undermined both.

He talks of fair competition to deliver a quality service. His government then ensures competition biased in favour of the private sector and based on what is cheapest, not what is best.

Imagine the dilemma of a local authority. Contract compliance is all but outlawed so that fly-by-night contractors can undercut already low rates of pay. Department of Environment rules for compulsory competitive tendering — a "contractor's charter" — discriminate against local labour. And Whitehall constraints on local expenditure force local authorities to specify in invitations to tender a lower standard of service, simply to save money for other purposes, for example, to avoid being poll-tax capped.

The result, demonstrated by a survey in April, published by the public services privatisation research unit, of 1,600 local authority contracts, is that private companies are four times more likely than council workforces to have problems in delivering services and five times more likely to have their contract terminated prematurely.

Soviet emigration

From Ms Naomi Cohen

Sir, It is not surprising that opposition within the Soviet parliament to the emigration bill was based on fears of a brain-drain and excuses of exorbitant cost (reports, May 14, 21; leader, May 21). It would however have been a most pleasant surprise if its passage had been delayed in order to bring the bill in line with international law.

Now passed into Soviet law, this fifth draft of the bill still fails to comply either with the Soviet Union's international obligations or with minimum standards of international law.

In its restriction of emigration on the ground of state secrecy as opposed to state security, in its application of an indefinite and unspecified extension to the five-year "limit" on refusal of a passport, in its unwillingness to clarify whether those that have been previously denied the right to leave would be required to wait an additional five (or more) years on top of the 12 they may have already endured, this law is at fault.

Not until the Soviet Union meets its obligations in full should Western governments consider their job to be done.

Yours faithfully,
NAOMI COHEN
(National fieldworker),
Student & Academic Campaign
for Soviet Jews,
Tudor House,
Llanvorn Road, NW2,
May 22.

Unity and Europe

From the Director of the European Movement

Sir, The 100-odd Conservatives who supported a motion calling for a British rejection of monetary and political union (report, May 22) did so on the day that Chancellor Kohl spoke of building a United States of Europe. They appear to wish to prevent Britain from playing a full and central role in the development of the European Community.

Successful polls have shown popular support for both economic and political integration. Any new treaty or treaty revision will require the assent of the Westminster Parliament. Nevertheless, it would be absurd to pretend that our opposition could prevent our partners moving towards integration. It would simply mean our exclusion.

To stand aloof as we did in the past was unfortunate; to refuse to take part in the current debate, knowing full well that we shall eventually have to accept the outcome, would be irresponsible.

Yours faithfully,
PETER LUFF, Director,
The European Movement (British Council),
1 Whitehall, SW1.

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The European Movement (British Council),
1 Whitehall, SW1.

Museums: what the visitors want

From Mrs Valerie Cumming

Sir, The responsibility for changed public attitudes towards museums ("Popular museums can be scholarly too", Janet Daley, May 17) is not solely the preserve of museum directors.

The "highly motivated lay public" often looks to newspapers for guidance about how to spend free time. There is abundant guidance and reportage about films, plays, TV, and sports events, but newspapers rarely discuss the broad range of subject matter, aimed at diverse audiences, which museums present to the public.

Tabloids are usually interested in museums as news items — charges, redundancies, etc. — and the broadsheets retain their "uncompromising snobbery" by employing art critics who venture into museums only to report upon the fine arts. If newspapers want to help museums reach wider audiences the solution is in their own hands — employ museum critics, who are given regular space to offer constructive reviews on everything from science to social history.

Museums regularly and quietly achieve the balance between "uncompromising snobbery" and "commercialism" through changing displays, films, family days, education programmes, handling sessions and many more activities, which allow all visitors to enjoy museums. Finding out about these is, though, not assisted greatly by the newspapers.

Yours faithfully,
VALERIE CUMMING
(Deputy Director),
Museum of London,
London Wall, EC2,
May 17.

From Professor Emeritus Luke Herrmann

Sir, Perhaps Janet Daley should go more often to the British Museum, which she would invariably find crowded with visitors of all ages and nationalities. There were over five million of them in 1990.

Their presence indicates that, far from excluding them for reasons of scholarly snobism, the retiring director and his staff have succeeded in making their museum one of the most popular in the world, and despite being popular it is still as it should be, an institution where scholarship thrives.

Yours faithfully,
LUKE HERRMANN,
The Coombes, Sibbertoft,
Market Harborough, Leicestershire.

Hard on the eye

From Mr John Bull

Sir, I have just returned from a frustrating visit to the Tate gallery to view John Constable's paintings. The weather was dull and grey. The daylight in the Constable gallery was at such a low level my visit was virtually worthless.

Several of the galleries had artificial lighting, which made viewing a pleasure, though the room showing the early English paintings was even more Syrian than the Constable room. The attendant, when asked for the lighting to be switched on, said the light would soon get better; it didn't.

All painting, especially John Constable's, is about light. In view of the forthcoming major Constable exhibition at the Tate (June 13-September 15), may we hope that we shall be able to see these wonderful paintings in a light level that makes sense of the artist's efforts?

Yours faithfully,
JOHN BULL,
51 Spencer Road, Wimbledon, SW20,
May 18.

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17

CHANNEL 8

6.00 The Channel Four Daily 8.25 Schools

12.00 Noah's Ark: The Guano Birds. Spanish natural history series

12.30 Sesame Street. Presented by Susan and Samons

2.00 Bessie Street. For pre-school children

2.00 A Full Life. Churlton Heston casts to Jill Cochrane about his Hollywood career (r)

2.30 Film: Frieda (1947, b/w)

● CHOICE: When Ealing was not turning out comedies it was usually addressing social issues of the day. At the time, at least, its "serious" films often had more impact. Made two years after the end of the second world war, *Frieda* handled the tricky subject of how far Britain was prepared to forgive the recent enemy. Marlene Dietrich had her English-speaking role as a German girl who helps an RAF officer (David Farrar) to escape from a prisoner-of-war camp. In gratitude he marries her and brings her back to England, where she runs into hostility and prejudice. Based on a play by Ronald Millar, more recently famous as a speech writer for Mrs Thatcher, the film's liberal sympathies are clear. But the complexity of the Farrar character in particular makes this a less straightforward piece than is suggested by the contemporary publicity slogan: "Would you want your son to marry a German woman?"

4.20 Story of the Foolish Husband. Animation from the Soviet Union

5.00 Fittsen-to-One

5.00 Love Lucy (b/w). Classic American sitcom from the Fifties

5.30 The Triple Net: The White Road. A repeat of the series exploring the work of 20th century Welsh writers. Iolo Gregory plays Kate Roberts (r). (Teletext)

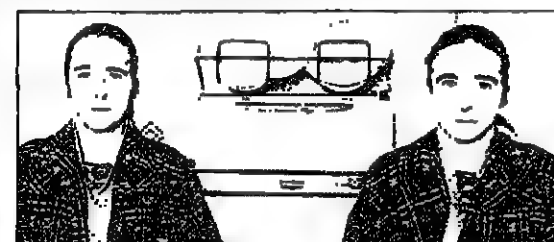
6.00 Kate & Allie. Sitcom about two divorced women sharing a Greenwich Village apartment (r)

6.30 Tonight with Jonathan Ross. The guests are comedian Mike McShane, newspaperman-turned-novelist Eddy Shah and boxers Chris Eubank and Michael Watson

7.00 Channel 4 News with Nicholas Owen and Zeinab Badawi. (Teletext)

7.50 First Reaction. Billy Bragg on Bob Dylan at 50

8.00 Brookside. Liverpool soap. (Teletext)



Living in each other's shadow: Greta and Freda Chaplin (8:30pm)

8.30 Short Stories: A Pair Of One.
 ● **CHOICE:** Grete and Freda Chaplin are identical twins whose togetherness has become an obsession. Now in their late forties, they have never been apart and are reluctant to leave the house on their own. After an unfortunate brush with a neighbour, they rely on a retired textile engineer, Jack Davenport, to protect them from prying eyes. They talk in unison, dress identically in bizarre clothes and even vacuum the floor together. To the outsider it will seem very odd. To stick together by their mother, who also advised them to stay close together, they are protected by their parents and not allowed into the family home. Every three weeks she travelled to York, where they hid behind a hedge's gap to snatch a glimpse of their mother and father. Juliet Derrington's film boils down nine hours of interviews with the twins to give a searching insight into their strange and stunted life. (Teletext)

9.00 Celestial Airplane. A comedy about a cosy Boston bar. (Teletext)

9.30 Dig includes a tour of an unusual Notting Hill garden and a look at Douglas Maxwell's bean cathedral. (Teletext)

10.00 Rosanne. American comedy series. (Teletext)

10.30 Absolutely. Patchy comedy sketches written and performed by Monwenne Banks, Jack Docherty, Moray Hunter, Gordon Kennedy, Peter Baskie and John Sparkes

11.00 Friday At The Dome. Live music from London's Kilburn National from Andrew Roachford, Karl Wallinger, Transvision Vamp and Big Dish. Plus an interview with Wendy James

12.15am Six Of The Best with Jonathan Ross. A repeat of Monday's programme from the Cannes Film Festival in which the guests were Kylie Minogue, Timbaland Dalton and the director of Madonna's new video. Ask him to perform. (Teletext)

12.45 Film: Mingers at the Window (1942, b/w). A Sluggish thriller starring Basil Rathbone as a psychotic who hypnotises patients at a lunatic asylum into committing murder so that he can claim an inheritance. Then a dancer (Laraine Day), who knew him under his previous name, joins a theatrical producer (former *Dr Kildare* star, Lew Ayres) to halt his murderous progress. There are good moments but the film can't sustain its seriousness to take itself. Directed by Charles Laughton. **Ends at 2.20**

discovers a link between
local library and a gene

Screening GJ Gardner and Melody Anderson
Ends at 5:00

WEEKLY SPORTS

Wire the Asns and Marzopolo satellites.
11:00pm Cricket: First Argentina One-Day
Test Match - England v West Indies at
Edgbaston 11.00 Argentine v USSR at
Old Trafford 1.30pm World 2.00 World
Weekend Team Cup Tennis 5.00 Westsiding
10.00 Red Line 8.00 Matchroom
Country House Snooker 10.00 World Team
Cup Tennis 12.00 Matchroom League Snooker

SCREENSPORT

Wire the Asns and Marzopolo satellites.
11.00pm Cricket: First Argentina One-Day
Test Match - England v West Indies at
Edgbaston 1.30pm World Rugby League Cup Final
8.00 USWA Wrestling 11.00 Indy Car
Racing 12.00 Motor Sport F3000 1.00
World Team Cup Tennis 2.00 World
Team Cup Tennis 3.30 International Cycling 4.00
La Vuelta Cycling Tour of Spain 5.00 Moot

SPORT

Sport 8.00 NBA Basketball 11.00 Live
Proms 12.00am Netel, Ice Hockey 2.00 PGA
Golf Tour 4.30 World Snooker Channel 8.30
Sport Spain 8.45 Ladies Pro Bowling

LIFESTYLE


Wire the Asns satellites.

10.00am Great American Gameshow
11.15 Coffee Break 11.20 Everyday
11.50 The Weal with Yast 12.15pm
Sally Jessup Harrison 1.05 Star Time 1.10 Search
for Tomorrow 1.40 The Edge of Night 2.05
Dorothy Clark 2.30 Lifestyle Plan 3.40
The Tom Ewell Show 3.10 Raftery's Rules 4.00
The Week 4.10 The Mornin'After 4.40
Great American Gameshow 6.00 The
Skelton Showtop Programme 8.00
Country House Snooker 10.00
Matchroom League Snooker
12.00 Lifestyle Satellite

MTV

Wire the Asns satellites.
Twenty-four hours of rock and pop

RADIO 4



Another pathetic case waiting outside the Brooke Hospital

How you can help the Brooke Hospital for Animals, Cairo

This tragic sight is not uncommon in the Middle East today. Each week the Brooke Hospital for Animals gives free treatment to hundreds of suffering animals, and saves many more from years of crippling work.

If you would either like to receive more information or to support our work, simply fill in the coupon below and send it to:

**Richard Searight, Brooke Hospital for Animals, Dpt T1
1 Regent St, London SW1. Or call us on 071-930 0210.**

I would like to know more about the Brooke Hospital for Animals
(Charity No 207869)

NAME: Mr/Mrs/Miss _____

ADDRESS _____

POSTCODE _____ T1

They depend on us - we depend on you



Highland	6.13	4.8	5.45	4.8	Shoreham	9.06	5.1	5.30	5.6
Highway	6.13	4.8	5.45	4.8	Southernham	8.55	4.0	9.24	4.2
Heat	4.10	6.3	4.17	6.6					

Time in msec: 1m=3.2890ft.

LOW 1008.5

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HIGH 1032

1024 1016 1016 1024

40°N 50°N 10°W 20°E

Legend:
 Warm front
 Cold front
 Occluded front

21

Information supplied by Met Office

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Habitat group loses £7.1m

STOREHOUSE, the Habitat, Mothercare and BHS retailing group, made a bottom-line attributable loss of £7.1 million in the year to March 1991.

The loss at Habitat dropped from £6.9 million to £11.9 million on sales of £206 million (£237 million). BHS profits fell from £27.4 million to £21.6 million on sales slightly up at £517 million.

Overall pre-tax profits dropped 52 per cent to £6.2 million. Earnings per share fell from 2.1p to 1p but the final dividend has been maintained at 2.5p, making an unchanged 5p.

Temps, page 23

Whitbread rises

Whitbread has provided a further £42 million against restructuring costs incurred because of the monopolies commission enquiry into the brewing industry. The company set aside an initial £45 million in the previous year. Annual pre-tax profits rose from £265.7 million to £291.5 million and earnings per share from 42.5p to 46.72p. A final dividend of 12p (11p) makes 16.3p (14.8p).

Temps, page 23

Thames falls

Thames Television warned shareholders that results for the first half of this year will be "substantially worse" than a year ago. Pre-tax profits in the year ended December were £10.1 million against £26.4 million for the previous nine months. The total dividend is 16p (12p for nine months).

Temps, page 23

Geevor price hit

Geevor shares tumbled from 94p to 34p yesterday as the company announced that it was having difficulty with planned asset sales, has failed to gain any support from alternative bankers, and that staff numbers have been cut from 185 a year ago to 30.

THE POUND

US dollar 1.7370 (+0.0110)
German mark 2.9739 (+0.0026)
Exchange index 92.0 (+0.1)

STOCK MARKET

FT 30 Share 1945.4 (+12.0)
FT-SE 100 2482.8 (+16.9)
New York Dow Jones 2900.49 (-9.84)
Tokyo Nikkei Ave 25643.65 (+244.99)

MAJOR CHANGES

RISERS:
J Halstead 287 1/2p (+11p)
Pye 152p (+9p)
Viv Smith 'A' 320p (+12p)
Sofitel 737 1/2p (+13p)
Smithline Bechem 753 1/2p (+12p)
Tate 150 1/2p (+9p)
VSEL 67 1/2p (+5p)
Wellcome 607 1/2p (+19p)
Carlton Comm 448p (+12p)
Macarthy 224p (+32p)
Whitbread 'A' 485p (+13p)
Medeva 148p (+10p)
Reuters 850p (+27p)
Bass 97 1/2p (+17p)
Grand 770 1/2p (+15p)
Young 'A' 440p (+15p)
FALLS:
Steel Burt 27 1/2p (-14p)
Yorkshire TV 291 1/2p (-10p)
Sovereign 110p (-16p)
News Corp 350p (-14p)
Closing Prices...Page 25

INTEREST RATES

London: Bank Base: 12%
3-month interbank 11 1/2%-11 3/4%
3-month eligible bills 11 1/2%-10 3/4%
US: Prime Rate 5 1/2%
Federal Funds 5 1/4%
3-month Treasury Bills 5.40-5.30%
30-year bonds 98 1/2%-98 3/4%

CURRENCIES

London: New York:
£ \$1.7370 £ \$1.7340
£ DM2.9739 £ DM2.7145
£ Sfr2.9739 £ Sfr2.7145
£ FF10.1050 £ FF9.5820
£ Yen239.01 £ Yen137.70
£ Index32.0 £ Index32.0
ECU £1.000000 ECU £1.000000
£ ECU1.44335 £ Sfr1.28670

GOLD

London Fixing:
AM \$354.00-354.50
close \$354.00-354.40 (£204.80-205.30)
New York:
Comex \$353.75-354.25

NORTH SEA

Brent (Jun) \$18.50 bbl (£16.65)
*Derivates latest trading price

RETAIL PRICES

RPI: 130.1 April 1987=100

Yorkshire raises dividend 14.8%

Water groups urged to avoid high payouts

By GRAHAM SEARJEANT, FINANCIAL EDITOR

IAN Byatt, the director general of water services, has issued a dramatic warning to the privatised water groups not to pay excessive dividend increases just because temporary factors had made profits higher than expected when price limits were set.

The warning came on the day that Yorkshire Water, the first of the ten water and sewerage companies to announce its profits for the year to end March, declared a 14.8 per cent rise in dividend. This is about 5 points above the rate of inflation declared last November, the level used to fix this year's prices.

In his 55th letter to managing directors of water utilities, Mr Byatt writes: "In a situation where bills are rising rapidly, customers will not expect companies to make unnecessarily high profits and, in particular, to pay out excessive dividend rises."

Companies should plough back extra profits into their investment spending or raise prices by less than the limit. Under the five-year price control regime, each of the companies is allowed to raise prices by inflation plus a varying factor, called K, calculated to pay for the £30 billion investment programme and allow dividends to rise at an average of just below 5 per cent a year in real terms.

Apart from Yorkshire, the

companies are still in the process of fixing their final dividends, but leading City analysts expect the average rise to be about 16.7 per cent, with Wessex, Thames and Severn Trent all rising by more than 18 per cent.

Mr Byatt writes: "It is up to management to decide on dividends, but if companies were to use the present position to pay out dividends above those anticipated when the K factor was set they would need to be ready to answer pointed questions from customers and from the regulator."

Sir Gordon Jones, chairman of Yorkshire Water, said it had deliberately raised its prices in March 0.6 per cent less than permitted to give customers some of the benefit from cost savings. Some projects were brought forward so capital spending reached the planned £250 million despite lower than expected costs.

Over a two-year period, Yorkshire has raised prices 1.5 per cent less than permitted. Of the other companies, however, only Southern Water has put up prices less than allowed, because of planning delays on investment.

Yorkshire's pre-tax profits of £114 million were 12.6 per cent up on the adjusted level for 1989-90, and its dividend of 17.7p was covered by earnings of 52.2p per share. Profits were higher than expected a year ago partly because of the benefit of high

interest rates on the group's initial "green dowry", but mostly because cost increases had been kept to 8 per cent compared with a 10 per cent rise in turnover.

This was partly due to efficiency savings and partly because inflation in construction costs had averaged about 6 per cent, below the general level of inflation, as a result of competition during the recession. The group made profits on £7 million of unregulated turnover in new businesses, mainly waste management.

Stephen Doe, water analyst at Smith New Court, the securities group, said it was fortunate for the industry that Yorkshire Water was the first to report its results because it took a responsible attitude to the wishes of the regulator and was most highly rated on the stock market for that reason.

Other companies have benefited from the same special factors, which are likely to continue this year due to the steep fall in inflation since prices were set.

Mr Doe said Mr Byatt showed it was acceptable to make higher profits than predicted temporarily or through efficiency gains and diversification. His dividend warning was likely to be heeded in the current year.

Trevor Newton, Yorkshire's deputy chairman, said: "The last thing we can handle is regulatory uncertainty. Our ambition is to be bottom of the director general's hit list."

Trade gap falls again

By ANATOLE KALITSKY, ECONOMICS EDITOR

BRITAIN'S underlying trade performance improved in April for the sixth month in succession, as exports continued to grow while imports stagnated.

Although April's estimated current account deficit widened slightly to £339 million from £336 million, there was a sharp improvement in the underlying trade balance excluding oil and erratic items.

The figures were marginally better than City economists had expected, but sterling and other financial markets were unaffected as investors focused on the possibility of a cut in interest rates today.

The Bank of England lent overnight money to the discount houses, instead of engaging in longer-term operations and this was interpreted

by some analysts as a signal that interest rates might be changed this morning, when the lending expired. Discount houses were said to be heavy buyers of short sterling contracts on the London International Financial Futures Exchange, fueling speculation they had picked up a signal on interest rates from the Bank.

The £339 million current account deficit puts the government well on target towards achieving its Budget forecast of a £6 billion deficit for 1991 as a whole. The deficit in the first four months of the year totals £1.7 billion, equivalent to an annual rate of £5 billion.

The current account deficits since the start of the year have included estimated surpluses of £500 million monthly from

Britain's trade in invisible services such as finance, tourism and government transfers. The visible trade deficit last month was £839 million, against £836 million in March.

Excluding oil and erratic items, the deficit in April was £845 million, against £1.08 billion in March. Britain's oil surplus shrank to £40 million from £184 million as a result of North Sea maintenance, while erratics swung to a deficit of £34 million from a £63 million surplus in March.

American durable goods orders rose 2.9 per cent in April after three consecutive months of falls. The rise was bigger than expected, but much of the gain was due to defence orders.

Comment, page 23

Six North Sea winners

By MARTIN BARROW



Wakeham: licences

THE energy department has offered licences to all six applicants in the first ever frontier offshore licensing round, which is intended to open the way for the development of unexplored areas of the North Sea.

Operators of the six consortia are Esso Exploration and Production, Amoco UK, Mobil North Sea, Conoco UK, Total Oil Marine and Texaco Britain. A further five tranches of acreage failed to

attract any interest. John Wakeham, the energy secretary, also announced the names of successful applicants for licences under the twelfth licensing round for 74 blocks in the North Sea and, once again, independent oil companies, including Lasmo and Ultramar, appear to have fared well.

National Power, the privatised electricity generator, has a 25 per cent interest in a consortium with Total.

GRE puts farmland up for sale

City slickers retiring their wellies

By MATTHEW BOND

IT SEEMS like only yesterday that every self-respecting City fund manager was swapping his pinstripes and furred umbrella for a tweed suit and wellies and going farming. In the Sixties, Seventies and early Eighties, City institutions ploughed millions of pounds into buying thousands of acres of British farmland.

What a difference a decade makes. It was announced yesterday that one of the Square Mile's biggest farmers will join the growing list of City institutions that are turning their backs on the difficulties of modern agriculture to return to the familiar territory of stocks and shares.

In one of the biggest transactions the farmland market has ever seen, Guardian Royal Exchange has placed its farming company, British Field Products, on the market. Complete with 22,500 acres of some of the best land in

East Anglia, the company is likely to cost something in the region of £38 million.

Savills and Robinson & Hall, the agent instructed to sell the company, believes the sale is the largest disposal of vacant agricultural land for decades. The only transaction halfway comparable was last year's sale of an 11,500 estate for the British Coal pension fund.

As one of the first institutions to invest in agriculture, GRE bought BFP in 1965. As a result of its decision to sell, the end is in sight for a 26-year stewardship of large tracts of Lincolnshire, Norfolk and Cambridgeshire.

But at GRE's City headquarters, this was not an excuse for the sort of sentimentality normally associated with matters rural, especially when those matters rural are being sold. "It's really just part of a strategic reappraisal," said a GRE spokesman coldly. "Farming does not fit into our core business as we see

it." At British Field Products, which employs 170 people and has a turnover of over £10 million a year, there was an air of optimism despite GRE's decision.

David Bridge, managing director, believes potential buyers should not be deterred by the air of gloom that surrounds British farming. He pointed to a near-doubling in net profits over the last three years to £2.6 million last time round. But could a buyer be so confident about the future, given the difficulties farm ministers are having in agreeing farm prices?

"We set out some years ago on a policy of not growing totally EEC-supported crops. Today we have got 50 per cent of the area we farm in non-supported crops," said Mr Bridge. But for now, quite who will be reaping the profits from next year's crops of peas, potatoes, carrots and cauliflowers is the £38 million question.



Ring up profits: Iain Vallance, chairman, after announcing results yesterday

Cuts help BT top £3bn

By OUR FINANCIAL EDITOR

BRITISH Telecom is beginning to feel the effects of the recession, but profits are still rising due to cost cutting.

Ignoring the £390 million exceptional restructuring charge a year ago, pre-tax profits increased 14.2 per cent to £3.08 billion in the year to end March on turnover up 6.8 per cent to £13.2 billion.

A final dividend of 8.05p increases the total dividend for the year 12.7 per cent to 13.3p from earnings of 34p per share, up 16.4 per cent ignoring the restructuring charge.

BT cut staff numbers by 18,800, or 8 per cent, including 6,000 managers, in the year of its restructuring. Iain Vallance, the chairman, said the company was likely to shed at least 10,000 more jobs this year as part of the drive to cut costs under the new more stringent price limits imposed on the group.

In the final quarter, turnover rose only 3.8 per cent, restricting the rise in pre-tax profits to 10.5 per cent. On the rolling 12-month average used by BT, the volume of inland calls was up 4 per cent at March 31 and overseas calls rose 6 per cent, compared with rises of 10 and 13 per cent a year earlier.

Mr Vallance said volume growth was now even lower, although it was falling at a slower rate than that recorded in the previous quarter. Costs increased about 5.7 per cent, but staff costs rose only 4.3 per cent. A net cash

inflow of £611 million, compared with an outflow of £1 billion in the previous 12 months, helped cut interest charges 14 per cent to £417 million and reduced borrowings from 48 per cent to 34 per cent of shareholders' funds.

Capital spending fell from £3.1 billion to £2.8 billion thanks to lower spending on

computers and property. Mr Vallance said a further £3 billion was likely to be spent this year.

The group said customer service was better than a year ago. In July, BT will cut an average 10 per cent from the cost of international calls.

Comment, page 23

Bank set to act on house prices

THE Governor of the Bank of England warned the Building Societies Association conference in Glasgow that a resurgence of house price inflation would be firmly countered by the authorities.

Robin Leigh-Pemberton, who said earlier this year he was prepared to consider credit controls if house prices overheated, said the Bank would be watching for signs of house price inflation.

"If it rears its head again and threatens a more general resurgence in inflation, then we will be determined to keep it in check," he said. A survey by the Royal Institute of Chartered Surveyors showed 68 per cent of estate agents reporting static house prices between February and April.

Mr Leigh-Pemberton said that, with hindsight, the price of credit was too low during a critical period in the Eighties, when deregulation freed the credit supply. House prices rose by an average of 11.5 per cent a year in the Eighties and were an important factor in overall inflation that peaked last autumn.

Noting that German house prices fell for much of the Eighties without adverse impact on prosperity in Germany, Mr Leigh-Pemberton said that Britain would have to behave more like Germany. "It is hard to see how rapidly rising house prices here could possibly be compatible with a general inflation rate in line with the best in Europe."

Building society receipts more than doubled last month to £1.34 billion despite falling interest rates. This, the largest monthly inflow since July 1989, was helped by the return of funds after members' unsuccessful applications for shares in the newly privatised electricity generating companies. Gross mortgage advances fell £250 million to £3.3 billion and net new commitments rose by £33 million to £3.53 billion.

Mark Boleat, the director general of the Building Societies Association, said: "The gross advances and net new commitments figures for April suggest that new lending remained broadly unchanged since March."

Mortgage rates fell at the beginning of April and were cut again to a standard building society rate of 12.95 per cent at the beginning of May.

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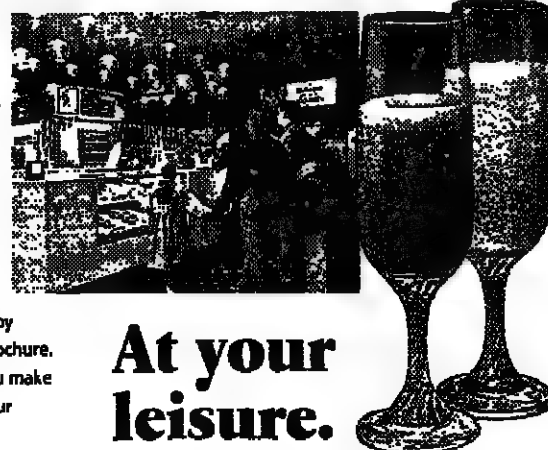
You might care to wind down in Sawyer's winebar & bistro, with its listed mosaic facade; or tackle a 'Desperate Dan' Pie at Mad O'Rourke's Pie Factory pub; or choose from the 12 feature films at Showcase Cinemas at the M6 Junction 10.

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Organisation _____ Address _____
Postcode _____ Tel _____

Poulenc ready for \$1bn of disposals

From Ross TIEHAN
IN PRINCETON, NEW JERSEY

RHONE-POULENC, the French state-controlled chemicals group, is planning \$1.5 billion of disposals within the next 12 months.

Sales and joint ventures will complete rationalisation of \$4 billion of acquisitions during the past four years, which have made Rhone-Poulenc the world's seventh largest chemicals company.

They are intended by Jean-Rene Fourtoun, the chairman, as the prelude to partial privatisation in 1993 or 1994. M Fourtoun hopes a reduction in the state shareholding, nominally 56 per cent but larger because of indirect shareholdings, could be accompanied by an equity issue to raise funds for further acquisitions.

Speaking at Princeton during a visit to part of Rhone-Poulenc's American operations, M Fourtoun rejected suggestions that he might use new French legislation permitting state companies to issue shares to joint venture partners. He said Rhone-Poulenc was grossly undervalued because of his government's majority shareholding.

The French government is unlikely to decide upon the company's future until the outcome of the French elections in 1993 is known.

In the past, Rhone-Poulenc has had to resort to creative financing schemes, such as an issue of subordinated perpetual floating rate notes to raise funds. None the less, gearing remains at 90 per cent. M Fourtoun said: "The fact is that the stock is permanently undervalued so it is not easy to raise money. I don't want to issue any equity during the coming three years."

As a result of its acquisitions last year, Rhone-Poulenc derived 43 per cent of its \$7.96 billion sales from life sciences (pharmaceuticals and agricultural chemicals), 36 per cent from speciality chemicals and 21 per cent from bulk chemicals. Its dependence on the French market has been reduced from 30 per cent to 23 per cent. Sales in North America have soared to account for 21 per cent of the group total. Pre-tax profits at \$380 million have yet to show the benefits of the group's expansion.

Gatward left TVS with £375,000 handshake

By MELINDA WITTSTOCK, MEDIA CORRESPONDENT

JAMES Gatward, the man who must surely be blamed if TVS Entertainment loses its franchise in the Channel 3 licence auction, left the company with a £375,000 payoff.

Mr Gatward, who was one of ITV's highest paid executives last year with a salary of £250,000 plus bonuses, had hoped, however, to get more than £1 million. Responsible for TVS's disastrous £190.5 million acquisition of MTM, the loss-making American studio, Mr Gatward resigned as

group chief executive last December after pressure from Générale des Eaux and Canal Plus, TVS's French shareholders.

In January, he left the company altogether, resigning as executive chairman of TVS Television. City analysts said that while the £375,000 payout seems high, given his actions took the company into the red, it represents a big saving for shareholders.

TVS, which announced a £30 million injection of funds last week from Time Warner and Associated Newspapers should it win its licence, is facing three rival bids for its South and Southeast ITV franchise.

Its challengers include Carlton Communications, the M&P-backed Meridian Broadcasting and CPV-TV, the David Frost and Virgin consortium. Gerry Buckland, TVS director of corporate affairs, has left the company after reports of a disagreement with senior staff. Neither Mr Buckland nor Tony Brook, TVS managing director, were available for comment.



Gatward: sought £1 million

Shaftesbury suffers £5.9m interim loss

By MARTIN BARROW

SHAFTESBURY, the developer specialising in properties in London's West End, has provided a further £3.9 million against falling property values, leaving an interim pre-tax loss of £5.9 million.

Losses per share were 23.9p. In the first six months of the past financial year it reported taxable profits of £194,000 and earnings of 0.46p a share. On the stock market the shares fell 7p to 120p.

Shaftesbury has provided £2.04 million against the cost of development properties and a further £1.84 million in

respect of the company's share of properties held by associates. Total provisions last year were £4.28 million.

Rental income rose to £2.9 million (£2.64 million), yielding net revenue from properties of £2.34 million (£2.21 million). However, losses attributable to associate companies increased to £2.61 million (£303,000) while net interest charges rose to £3.03 million (£1.22 million).

In the 12 months to the end of September 1990, Shaftesbury incurred losses of £5.5 million after provisions.



Hats off to a hot summer: John Young, chairman, on one of the brewer's drays

Young profits froth over £5m

By PHILIP PANGALOS

AN INCREASE in beer volumes, boosted by a successful push into the guest beer market and a hot summer, helped Young & Co's Brewery, the Wandsworth brewer, report improved full-year profits.

Pre-tax profits rose to £5.03 million (£4.62 million) in the year to end March, on turnover up 12.6 per cent to £58.5 million.

John Young, the chairman, said: "Traditional beers are making a comeback. People at long last are going back to drinking more ales."

A strong performance from the free trade and managed houses helped boost beer volumes 5 per cent in a relatively depressed market, bettering

the national average. Mr Young said the group had benefited from the Monopolies and Mergers Commission measures last year aiding independent beer producers and increasing the sale of public houses.

He added: "We had a very good summer and the hot weather increases trade, although the weather does not seem to affect sales as much as it did in the past."

Trading profits rose 27.3 per cent to £6.87 million. Young's total number of public houses increased by six to 155.

Interest payments rose to £1.83 million (£1.07 million), reflecting the acquisition of more public houses and investment in the dev-

elopment of the Bridge Hotel, a 68-bedroom hotel at Greenford, west London, which has an occupancy rate of about 69 per cent. The group plans to buy a further eight hotels.

Mr Young added: "Although the future outlook is somewhat unsettled, we are cautiously optimistic for the coming year and will take full advantage of the further opportunities that may arise as a result of the MMC report."

Earnings rose to 28.38p (24.11p) a share. Shareholders will benefit from an increased final dividend of 7p (6p), making an improved total of 13p (11.5p) for the year. The A shares gained 15p to 440p.

Westbury calls on shareholders

By OUR CITY STAFF

WESTBURY is the latest builder to call on shareholders for cash to repair a balance sheet damaged by the severe downturn in demand for housing.

The company, which operates in Wales and the west of England, is raising £20.7 million through a rights issue after returning losses of £8.1 million before tax for the year to end February. Losses per

share were 14.6p. The provisions are in line with a warning it gave in March. The total dividend for the year is maintained at 5p a share, with a final payment of 5.75p.

Westbury has also promised a total dividend of at least 9p for the following year, although no profit is forecast.

The rights issue, underwritten by Kleinwort Benson, is of one new share for every

three held at 130p. Existing Westbury shares fell from 166p to 162p. Borrowings will initially fall from £55.8 million to £35 million, reducing gearing below 30 per cent.

Westbury has continued to build homes, maintaining turnover at £171.1 million last year, compared with £174.36 million. Operating profits fell to £14.41 million (£36.09 million).

Charterhouse to buy BCMB

By ANGELA MACKAY

CHARTERHOUSE, the merchant banking arm of Royal Bank of Scotland, has agreed in principle to buy British and Commonwealth Merchant Bank from its administrators, leaving only one big asset of British & Commonwealth, the parent group, to be sold: Exco, the money broker.

Neither party would confirm the price, which is yet to be determined by a formula linked to the quality of the loan book, but the final amount will be between £18 million and £25 million.

Exchange of contracts is expected by the end of June and completion soon after. BCMB's depositors are owed about £150 million and will be repaid immediately after completion. Total liabilities are about £300 million.

Ian Beith, Charterhouse's managing director and head of debt services, said: "Full repayment of depositors and other creditors is a condition of lifting the administration order."

"The acquisition allows us to diversify and increase our earnings base... building on existing expertise in property and structured finance while

enabling us to acquire loan assets in such areas as media and public sector finance."

Charterhouse is likely to phase out the BCMB name. Once the sale is completed there will be a lengthy review of the business that will involve the regulators.

Ernst & Young, the administrators, thought they had sold BCMB to Cukurova Group, the Turkish conglomerate, but the deal collapsed in March.

The sale to Charterhouse foresees an alternative plan to try and free some funds for BCMB's creditors.

BCMB went into administration last June, two months after its parent, and its assets have been frozen since.

Separately, Gerard & National Holdings, the discount house group, said it is to buy LM (Moneybrokers) from Exco for £12.5 million plus a possible further £3 million based on performance.

Gerard & National also reported net profits up 42 per cent to £12.1 million in the year to April 4. The final dividend of 14.5p per share makes 20.5p for the year, up from 19p.

Tace faces challenge

TACE, the environmental controls concern, has convened an extraordinary meeting for June 19 to consider calls for the removal of the entire board (Martin Barrow writes).

Norwich Union and Framlington, two institutional shareholders, are seeking the removal of David Nicolson, chairman, and his fellow directors to make way for the appointment of Michael Beckett at the head of a new board.

The institutions own 21 per cent of Tace but claim to speak for shareholders controlling 40 per cent.

Mr Nicolson, who succeeded Jack MacKenzie six weeks ago, said investors speaking for 29 per cent of Tace already intended to vote against the resolutions. Bob Morton, a City financier with a 4.4 per cent interest in Tace, is joining the board in a non-executive capacity.

RECENT ISSUES

EQUITIES			
Aberdeen Tst	49-1	Oryx Gold	184
Atlantic Resources	37	Proton Int (84p)	118
Aberforth Snt (100p)	129-1	Saxon Healthcare (195p)	174
Alliance Real	23	Smaller IT	77
Brabant Res (155p)	132	Stand Platform (225p)	145
CMW Group (80p)	80	Trio Int Tel	40
Dryden Blue Chip (100p)	102	Uni Uniform	110
EFM Income Tst	88	Unikem (100p)	118 +2
East German Inv	111	Wig Tpe App	237 +1
Eidos (100p)	50		
Etobrook	84		
Europe Energy	13		
Gresham Telecom	15		
Headline Rock	123		
Highcroft Inv	183		
Invergordon (135p)	138		
Levercrest (108p)	80		
MIMC	24		
Mini (20p)	24		
Minor Op Newspaper	119 +1		

BUSINESS ROUNDUP

Dobson maintains payout as profits fall

DOBSON Park Industries, the industrial electronics to mining equipment group, suffered a fall in pre-tax profits from £10.2 million to £6.53 million in the six months to end March, as turnover declined from £129.7 million to £114.2 million. Earnings per share slipped from 5.87p to 3.52p, although the interim dividend is maintained at 1.9p. Interest payments were slashed to £378,000 from £1.21 million last time.

Alan Kaye, chief executive, said the reduction in profits reflects the difficult trading environment affecting most parts of the group's activities. However, he emphasised that the balance sheet remains sound and the cost reduction exercises being carried out should ensure that the group will quickly benefit when conditions improve.

News Corp \$650m sale

THE News Corporation has sold nine American magazines to K-III Magazine Corporation for \$650 million. The transaction is expected to be completed by mid-June. Rupert Murdoch, chief executive of News Corp, said: "We are sorry to see these properties leave the fold, but wish our friends at K-III great success with their new publications."

Manders expands

MANDERS (Holdings), the ink and paint manufacturer, has paid £600,000 for the business of Millden Eagle, which makes decals and transfer markings for vehicle fleet livery, heavy engineering equipment and other markets. Millden Eagle had a turnover of £3.5 million in 1989 and tangible assets at the end of the year were £1.2 million.

Foster's terms agreed

FOSTER'S Brewing Group and its main banks have agreed on an Aus\$1.3 billion (£573.2 million) refinancing package involving the conversion of short-term debt to a maturity of more than 18 months. It will aid Foster's, formerly Elders IXL, as it restructures into a single-purpose brewer.

Australian Ratings, the credit-watch agency, said in January that the planned refinancing would contain new covenants governing Foster's relationship with Harlin Holdings, its main shareholder, which would preclude the payment of capital returns and abnormal dividends.

Takare to raise £15m

TAKARE, a nursing homes group, is raising £15.75 million by a further issue of debenture stock. The cash will be used to finance expansion. BZW will place a further tranche of Takare's 11.8 per cent first mortgage debenture, 2014, which, together with the £9.25 million already in issue, will be listed on the Stock Exchange through an introduction.

Medeva calls for £56m

MEDEVA, the medical group, is making a placing and one-for-three open offer, at 126p each of 45 million new shares, underwritten by Lazard Brothers, to raise £56.7 million to buy MD Pharmaceutical of Santa Ana, California. The price is \$72.2 million cash, options on 3 million ordinary shares and \$2.2 million for bonuses for senior MDP staff.

Brent Walker reprieve

BRENT Walker Group, the debt-plagued leisure conglomerate, has been granted a deferment of most of the £6.5 million first payment on its £102 million convertible capital bonds, due yesterday.

Bondholders speaking for £95 million of the issue have agreed that payment will be made on June 6. Interest in respect of the rest of the issue is to be paid. Brent Walker said the deferment would allow it to determine the precise terms of the restructuring proposals to be put to bondholders.

COMPANY BRIEFS

PLYSU (Fin)
Pre-tax: £7.52m (£5.51m)
EPS: 11.4p (8.5p)
Div: 3.15p, mkg 4.5p

TRIMCO (Fin)
Pre-tax: £2.5m (£3.81m)
EPS: 1.68p (3.78p)
Div: 0.8p, mkg 1.4p

MOURLAND (Int)
Pre-tax: £2.67m (£2.38m)
EPS: 11.3p (10.0p)
Div: 2.17p (1.97p)

AL ARCHER (Int)
Pre-tax: £708,000
EPS: 1.5p (1.7p)
Div: 3.15p (3.15p)

WARNER ESTATE (Int)
Pre-tax: £3.93m (£3.74m)
EPS: 5.41p (4.97p)
Div: 3.25p (3p)

FINFLOW STREAMLINES
Pre-tax: £1.22m (£3.2m)
EPS: 8.97p (23.32p)
Div: 2p, mkg 4p (6p)

RADIO CITY (Int)
Pre-tax: Loss £206,000
EPS: 5.12p (EPS: 11.48p)
Div: Nil (3.50p)

NEW LONDON (Fin)
Pre-tax: £3.68m (£1.09m)
EPS: 3 cents (0.3 cents)
Div: N/A

BERRY, BIRCH & NOBLE
Pre-tax: £268,000
EPS: 6.2p (4.3p)
Div: 1.5p (nil)

WINDSOR (Int)
Pre-tax: Loss £378,000
EPS: 1.13p (EPS: 0.14p)
Div: Nil (nil)

ACATOS & HUTCHESON
Pre-tax: £2.8m (£3.01m)
EPS: 5.1p (5p)
Div: 1.75p (1.75p)

ALPINE GROUP (Fin)
Pre-tax: Loss £68,000
EPS: 0.09p (loss: 14.36p)
Div: Nil (nil)

Last time's total dividend was 3.5p. Turnover grew to £85.3m (£58.6m). Company expects continued profits growth, gearing down to 22%.

Last time's total dividend was 1.4p. Fully diluted earnings slipped to 1.35p (2.34p). Company said trading conditions are still difficult.

Extraordinary debit of £228,000 (nil). Company said the outlook for the rest of the year remains satisfactory.

Last time's profit was £650,000. Turnover climbed to £1.32m (£1.17m). Operating profits rose to £335,000 (£280,000).

Turnover grew to £5.18m (£4.81m). Company said lettings have been slow, partly due to depressed state of the retail industry.

Final results. Turnover slipped to £66.2m (£66.1m). The company is continuing with its cost reduction programme.

Pre-tax profit last time was £458,000. Turnover slipped to £1.42m (£1.67m). Exceptional debit of £90,000 (nil).

Turnover advanced to \$44.7m (\$31.1m). The company said it is well positioned to pursue an active programme of expansion.

Final results. Last time's pre-tax profit was £200,000. Extraordinary debit of £106,500 (£86,250). Turnover grew to £5.26m (£4.92m).

Last time's profit was £120,000. Extraordinary debit of £1.8m (nil). Turnover climbed to £4.19m (£3.84m).

Interim results. Extraordinary credit of £300,000 (£320,000 debit). Company said that an improvement in cashflow has reduced gearing.

Pre-tax loss last time was £2.9m. Retained profit, £18,000 (loss of £2.83m). Turnover fell to £7.8m (£10.35m).

TRADITIONAL OPTIONS

First Dealings	Last Dealings	Last Dealings	For Settlement
May 7	May 24	Aug 8	Aug 10
Call options were taken out on 23/5/91	Barclays Holdings, Budge, McCarthy, T		
Under Res.			
Put & Call: Premier, Sullins.			

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BT

Preliminary
Results 1990/91

Results for fourth quarter and year to 31 March, 1991

	Fourth Quarter	Full Year
	£m	£m
Turnover	3,401	13,154
Operating profit	899	3,531
Profit before tax	756	3,075
Profit after tax	515	2,080
Earnings per ordinary share	8.6p	34.0p
Dividends per ordinary share (net)		13.3p
		12.7%

* Increase based on results for 1990 before exceptional charge of £200m.

The accounts from which these non statutory results are extracted have not yet been filed with the Registrar of Companies or reported on by the auditors.
A final dividend of 8.05 pence net per share, if approved at the Annual General Meeting on 18 July will make a total dividend of 13.3 pence net for the year. It will be paid on 11 September to those shareholders on the register on 8 August, 1991.

Highlights

- Turnover up by 6.8%.
- Earnings per share up by 16.4%.
- Dividends per share up by 12.7%.
- Quality of service continues to improve.

BT has achieved sound results in difficult economic conditions. Growth in demand for services has declined progressively throughout the year in line with the UK economy, but BT has contained its costs and operating margins have improved. In addition the company has undertaken a fundamental restructuring to prepare itself for the challenges of the 1990s."

Iain Vallance
Chairman

If you have any queries as a shareholder, please call 0345 010505. For daily information on the BT share price and matters of interest to shareholders generally please call 0345 010707. You may telephone these numbers from anywhere in the UK for the price of a local call.

British Telecommunications plc, 81 Newgate Street, London EC1A 7AJ.

0345 010505

The long awaited half-point cut in interest rates should finally arrive this morning, if punters in the money markets are to be believed.

The sharp rise in short sterling futures on 11th yesterday just before the close appeared to be due to some well-informed buying by discount house traders, who have a better idea than most about the Bank of England's intentions. The alternative rumour, that sterling might be taken into the narrow bands of the exchange-rate mechanism today, or over the weekend, seemed less plausible, but only because Norman Lamont, the Chancellor, specifically ruled out such a move, both in his Budget speech and in his subsequent appearance before the Commons Treasury Committee.

If it were not for these denials, the narrow band gambit would have considerable political and economic attractions at this stage, if only for the short term. Narrow band could underwrite a far more aggressive policy of interest rate cuts, which could become essential both politically and economically if the recession

shows no sign of abating within the next few months.

At present, sterling is looking increasingly vulnerable at DM2.97, since the interest rate advantage over the mark is nowhere near sufficient to compensate for a risk of a fall to the bottom of the ERM band. Even without a further cut this morning, one year money in London is paying only 2 per cent more than the one-year mark rate of 9½ per cent. But if the pound fell to the bottom of its present ERM band just before or after a general election next spring or summer, the foreign holder of sterling would suffer a capital loss of 6.8 per cent.

As the last possible date for a general election approaches, the foreign exchange speculators are going to rediscover this simple calculation. But a move to the narrow band, centred round the present mid-point of DM2.95, would instantly lift this cloud over sterling and the govern-

Sterling on the narrow band

COMMENT

ment's re-election prospects. What it would do to Britain's exporters and manufacturers would be a question for the next parliament to sort out.

Non-vintage

On the surface, things look black for British Telecom. Growth in call volumes has fallen by two-thirds in a year to about 3 per cent for inland calls. Under the new regime, prices are capped at an average 6½ per cent below retail price inflation, which is falling fast and is now below the underlying rate of inflation. Investors also face an autumn avalanche of shares as the government unloads up to 49 per cent of Britain's biggest company. No wonder the shares now have a sub-average rating of 11.3

times 1990-1 earnings, where they yield 4.6 per cent.

Beneath all this gloom, however, is the underlying strength of a company that has at least some growth in a sagging economy and has a momentum of cost cuts and productivity growth that should see it through this year and next.

The restructuring, though provided for in a £390 million charge a year ago, is only just unfolding in terms of annual savings. For instance, some 70 per cent of the jobs cut last year went in the second half.

The current year will still not be a vintage one for profits. International call prices will fall 10 per cent, so revenue in this crucial growth area is likely to fall after a rise of only 1.2 per cent last year. There should, however, be positive growth in inland call

revenue, which accounts for 40 per cent of group turnover, since the autumn price review only operated for half the financial year. Revenue from exchange line revenues, which is as important as international calls, will also continue to rise strongly, though not as fast as BT would like.

If overall profits rise by 8 or 9 per cent this year, assuming some help from newer businesses, BT will outpace the industrial average by a wide margin. The shares would then sell at less than 10½ times prospective earnings. There will also be room to keep dividends rising above the rate of inflation, which few will be able to manage comfortably.

Patrick Wellington of County NatWest reasons that the autumn share sale should also be good for BT's shares. British institutional shareholders are underweight in the stock because of the government holding. At some point before or after the

sale, they will therefore want to buy in the market. We shall see.

ICI silence

Financial markets are rather like nature in that both abhor a vacuum. Sir Denys Henderson and the rest of the ICI board would be wrong to act rashly simply because the hot breath of Hanson is at their necks. But they also have a responsibility to avoid as far as possible a disorderly rumour-driven market in ICI shares.

They are in a useful position to do so as Hanson has scrupulously avoided any statement that could trigger what the Takeover Panel describes as an offer period. ICI therefore has a relatively free hand to elaborate on the restructuring moves that it announced some time ago.

The plans, whatever they are, should make a positive read. For ICI is at the bottom of the chemicals cycle. While 1991 will be a dull year, a sharp recovery is in prospect for 1992 even without the benefits to arise from any reshaping of the group.



Out of the spotlight: Asil Nadir, the founder of Polly Peck, is unlikely to turn up at today's creditors' meeting

ABOUT 2,200 of Polly Peck International's creditors along with a gaggle of speculators are expected to attend today's meeting at Alexandra Palace to decide the future of the cash-strapped fresh fruit, hotels and electronics group.

Asil Nadir, the company's founder, chairman and biggest shareholder, is, however, unlikely to attend due to ill-health. The proceedings will be the duller for his absence.

At previous gatherings, Mr Nadir, who is facing charges of £25 million worth of theft and false accounting, has been ushered in by three bodyguards and ushered out into a waiting Daimler parked in a side alley and driven away at high speed with photographers running in his wake.

But even though Mr Nadir is one of his company's creditors, his presence would be an uncomfortable reminder of the past now that Richard Stone, Michael Jordan and Christopher Morris, the administrators, are trying to focus on the future.

They want creditors to vote for a long-term reconstruction of the company, rather than opt for immediate liquidation of the company.

An unofficial poll of some of the bigger bank creditors suggested support will be forthcoming particularly after a circular was dispatched this month estimating immediate liquidation would yield a return of only 20p in the pound.

If the vote is for the reconstruction, a formal creditors' committee will be formed from among the big-

Dilemma for creditors at Polly Peck's palace party

gest creditors—the banks who together are owed more than £1 billion. The committee is usually comprised of five creditors, however, this time the administrators are hoping to boost that number to 15 and include shareholders and bondholders.

Even though shareholder creditors far exceed the rest—23,000 versus 2,000—they are only owed £26 million of dividend income compared with £1.3 billion, so it is unlikely they will be able to have more than one representative.

The reconstruction plan envisages five core divisions. Three are mainstream: Del Monte Fresh Fruit, Sansui, the Japanese electronics group, quoted in Tokyo, and Vestel, the Turkish electronics arm quoted in Istanbul.

The value of other two, new divisions covering Polly Peck's non-Vestel businesses in Turkey and northern Cyprus are more difficult to

quantify and appear to be a way of hiving off the assets residing in the "too-hard basket".

These divisions would contain all the Near East food, packaging and leisure assets. Access to the books and operations has been hampered by injunctions in northern Cyprus and Turkey and Mr Nadir's lack of mobility after his arrest.

Relations have improved over the past month and negotiations have started once again, but the administrators fear this painstaking process will be wasted if the creditors vote for liquidation because Turkish Cypriot executives, in particular, would immediately close ranks.

One division, tentatively called East Mediterranean food and packaging, and including the Meyna and Suzzest food businesses, and the Unipac packaging company, might eventually be floated on the Istanbul stock

exchange where the Polly Peck name is well known and Mr Nadir has the support of his compatriots.

Recovering the £230 million invested in the other division, the hotel and leisure subsidiaries, is still a perplexing question which the administrators will need more time to solve if the creditors see fit to grant it.

Today, the administrators want the meeting's theme to be asset enhancement. But with the lack of figures related to the last division, creditors will be justified if they want to know why they should be asked to stick their hands into a lucky dip rather than opt for certainty.

What the three accountants will stress is the value of prime assets like Del Monte which is entering its peak revenue period, and the possibilities of rejuvenating the well-known brands within Sansui.

There is bound to be discontent from smaller creditors who have not been privy to the informal contact the administrators have enjoyed with leading creditors.

These creditors will probably have to be content with expressing dissent because voting clout is proportional to the amount a creditor is owed.

The administrators have worked hard on the reconstruction and doubtless have been earning their unqualified fees. What creditors have to decide is whether they have the nerve to continue to play a game where there could still be no winners.

ANGELA MACKAY

Storehouse is clean but empty

MICHAEL Julien may be describing Storehouse's balance sheet when he calls it "a clean company", but shareholders' main concern is likely to be that the group is clean of profits. The bottom line loss for the year to end March was £7.1 million.

The last time they saw any profit growth was in 1986-7. Since then, they have been promised jam tomorrow on an annual basis. This year is different, however. The Storehouse management is making no pretence that 1991 will be a good year. Only six weeks into the 12-month period, the management knows that the first half will be worse than last.

The big puzzle is how a company with a turnover of £1.21 billion, down 3 per cent, and a cost base up only 2 per cent can see operating profits fall 51 per cent to £19.2 million. One reason is gross margin erosion as old stock has been cleared and prices have been discounted.

The dividend has been held at 5p for the year despite the drop in pre-tax profits from £12.8 million to £6.2 million. Earnings have fallen from 2.1p to 1p a share. Operating profits fell at Habitat, Mothercare and British Home Stores.

There were £14.8 million of exceptional costs due to store closures and 3,400 lost jobs, and £11.2 million of extraordinary costs due to disposals. Mr Julien said the rationalisation programme is now complete.

Net assets are 111p a share, most of the asset backing comes from property, and gearing is less than 1 per cent. The healthy balance sheet and dismal profits performance may make the group ripe for takeover. Kingfisher would be keen to take Mothercare.

However, not even the prospect of a takeover makes the shares a sound investment. At 101p, they are on a price/earnings ratio of 29 times assuming profits of £21 million this year.

Thames TV

NEWS from television companies is all the same these days. Only the names change.

The story line features higher costs, weak advertising revenue and an increased adsketcher levy. Added to those woes is the uncertainty over who wins what in the franchise bidding round.

It was Thames Television's turn yesterday. Thames announced pre-tax profits of £10.1 million for the year ended December, compared with £26.4 million for a previous nine-month period, a year's total dividend of 16p, against a nine months' 12p,



Changes complete: Storehouse's Michael Julien

and a warning that 1991 interim results could be "substantially worse" than the £11.2 million seen in the first half of the previous year.

Staff levels and costs have already been cut — with further reductions over the 18 months likely — and there remain frowns over the American subsidiary that ran up an operating loss of £1.95 million on a £28.9 million turnover. In February, Thames had

forecast pre-tax profits of £11.5 million but, reflecting its 22 per cent stake in ITV, it had to pay up an additional £1.6 million of costs.

Thames also had a £2.1 million interest bill last year, compared with £2.9 million interest income previously.

Uncertain times may see pre-tax profits at only £15 million in 1991 to put the shares at 286p on 14.3 times prospective earnings.

Until the outcome of the franchise round is known, television investors should fasten their safety belts.

Whitbread

WHITBREAD'S undoubted strength as a retailer has been overshadowed by the uncertainty hanging over the brewing sector, nor has the company laid to rest understandable fears about a proposal to merge its brewing interests with Allied-Lyons.

This should not detract from the company's ability to extract some growth from a market which, as Whitbread admits, deteriorated month by month and shows little sign of recovering until the final quarter of this year, at the earliest.

In the 12 months to March 2, pre-tax profits rose from £265.7 million to £291.5 million and earnings from 42.51p a share to 46.72p. That is some going for a business so heavily dependent on consumer spending.

Stated operating profits fell from £280.1 million to £265.5 million but last year's figure included a £34.5 million contribution from wines and spirits, no longer part of the group. On a like-for-like basis sales grew 14 per cent.

Historically, restaurants and public houses have been the first to be hit in hard times but the first to bounce back when the pressure eases. There is nothing to suggest that it will be different next time round.

County NatWest expects profits of £309 million this year and earnings of 49.1p, placing the 'A' shares, at 481p, on a prospective price earnings ratio of less than ten. The rating is not demanding but brewing uncertainties reduce the appeal.

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THE TIMES CITY DIARY

Rhythm and greens

A BID for the new "non-pop" independent national radio licence by the Green Broadcasting Company was ruled invalid by the Radio Authority — because GBC forgot to enclose the £10,000 application fee. The bid, under the name of Metronome Radio, also failed to include full details of programme plans. Peter Games, chairman of Green Broadcasting and a former arts correspondent of *The Independent*, said after the close of Wednesday's deadline for acceptances that he "could not understand" why the bid had been refused. Classic FM, First National Radio and UK FM are competing for the channel

which will focus on "natural" music that does not rely on amplifiers. Metronome was promising music "free of artificial additives".

Drug hoards

THE world of accountancy



grows more exciting by the day. Take Maurice Withall, an insolvency practitioner with Grant Thornton, who has been called in by Customs & Excise to seize and sell drug-related assets. "We deal with yachts, aeroplanes and properties in Spain," says Withall, who adds that many drug traffickers find yet more exotic ways to invest their money. Uncut diamonds, samurai swords, gold bars and even military hardware find their way into smugglers' dens.

Fighting form

DAVID Abell, the chairman of Suter, was in fighting form at the industrial conglomerate's annual meeting in London yesterday. Not only is he pressing on with his lawsuit against Channel 4 and Ful-

crum productions over a programme in 1987, but also says Suter has no plans to drop a second action against Francis Industries, acquired in 1984 after a lengthy takeover battle. Abell has forked out between £100,000 and £250,000 on the first action, and the company has paid £250,000 on the second, which is unlikely to reach the courts until January. The three-year-old trade department report on Suter is due out soon.

Baited hook

LORD Hanson, basking in speculation over his plans for ICI, has decided to dispose of another asset — a lake in Milton Keynes. Dovecote lake, a former gravel pit, is being offered for sale by tender by ARC, a Hanson subsidiary.

Several leisure companies are said to be casting their eye over the site, which is expected to fetch "seven figures". Even so, Lord Hanson may be sorry to see the lake go. It is teeming with large predatory pike.

Canary oasis

AT LAST we can take Canary Wharf seriously. The half-occupied development in London's Docklands is finally to have its first pub. In August, Bass will be opening the Henry Addington, named after the prime minister who opened the original wharf in 1802. That will do nicely for staff at American Express, which will be sharing the site with the new watering hole.

JON ASHWORTH

Wellcome shares rise over ICI 'link'

Applicants are asked to write with C.V., recent photograph, copies of testimonials, and names, addresses and telephone numbers of 2 referees to:

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Alyon College
1885 Chetivres-Villars
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Tel: 010 41 25 35 27 21**

1st Other Chng Ytd			2nd Other Chng Ytd			3rd Other Chng Ytd			4th Other Chng Ytd			5th Other Chng Ytd			6th Other Chng Ytd			7th Other Chng Ytd			8th Other Chng Ytd			9th Other Chng Ytd			10th Other Chng Ytd			11th Other Chng Ytd			12th Other Chng Ytd			13th Other Chng Ytd			14th Other Chng Ytd			15th Other Chng Ytd			16th Other Chng Ytd			17th Other Chng Ytd			18th Other Chng Ytd			19th Other Chng Ytd			20th Other Chng Ytd			21st Other Chng Ytd			22nd Other Chng Ytd			23rd Other Chng Ytd			24th Other Chng Ytd			25th Other Chng Ytd			26th Other Chng Ytd			27th Other Chng Ytd			28th Other Chng Ytd			29th Other Chng Ytd			30th Other Chng Ytd			31st Other Chng Ytd			32nd Other Chng Ytd			33rd Other Chng Ytd			34th Other Chng Ytd			35th Other Chng Ytd			36th Other Chng Ytd			37th Other Chng Ytd			38th Other Chng Ytd			39th Other Chng Ytd			40th Other Chng Ytd			41st Other Chng Ytd			42nd Other Chng Ytd			43rd Other Chng Ytd			44th Other Chng Ytd			45th Other Chng Ytd			46th Other Chng Ytd			47th Other Chng Ytd			48th Other Chng Ytd			49th Other Chng Ytd			50th Other Chng Ytd			51st Other Chng Ytd			52nd Other Chng Ytd			53rd Other Chng Ytd			54th Other Chng Ytd			55th Other Chng Ytd			56th Other Chng Ytd			57th Other Chng Ytd			58th Other Chng Ytd			59th Other Chng Ytd			60th Other Chng Ytd			61st Other Chng Ytd			62nd Other Chng Ytd			63rd Other Chng Ytd			64th Other Chng Ytd			65th Other Chng Ytd			66th Other Chng Ytd			67th Other Chng Ytd			68th Other Chng Ytd			69th Other Chng Ytd			70th Other Chng Ytd			71st Other Chng Ytd			72nd Other Chng Ytd			73rd Other Chng Ytd			74th Other Chng Ytd			75th Other Chng Ytd			76th Other Chng Ytd			77th Other Chng Ytd			78th Other Chng Ytd			79th Other Chng Ytd			80th Other Chng Ytd			81st Other Chng Ytd			82nd Other Chng Ytd			83rd Other Chng Ytd			84th Other Chng Ytd			85th Other Chng Ytd			86th Other Chng Ytd			87th Other Chng Ytd			88th Other Chng Ytd			89th Other Chng Ytd			90th Other Chng Ytd			91st Other Chng Ytd			92nd Other Chng Ytd			93rd Other Chng Ytd			94th Other Chng Ytd			95th Other Chng Ytd			96th Other Chng Ytd			97th Other Chng Ytd			98th Other Chng Ytd			99th Other Chng Ytd			100th Other Chng Ytd			101st Other Chng Ytd			102nd Other Chng Ytd			103rd Other Chng Ytd			104th Other Chng Ytd			1
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MONEY MARKETS

[illegible]

COMMODITIES

1991		Rate		Change		Yr	
High	Low	Older	Younger	Older	Younger	Older	Younger
153	154	155	156	157	158	159	160
161	162	163	164	165	166	167	168
169	170	171	172	173	174	175	176
177	178	179	180	181	182	183	184
185	186	187	188	189	190	191	192
193	194	195	196	197	198	199	200
201	202	203	204	205	206	207	208
209	210	211	212	213	214	215	216
217	218	219	220	221	222	223	224
225	226	227	228	229	230	231	232
233	234	235	236	237	238	239	240
241	242	243	244	245	246	247	248
249	250	251	252	253	254	255	256
257	258	259	260	261	262	263	264
265	266	267	268	269	270	271	272
273	274	275	276	277	278	279	280
281	282	283	284	285	286	287	288
289	290	291	292	293	294	295	296
297	298	299	300	301	302	303	304
305	306	307	308	309	310	311	312
313	314	315	316	317	318	319	320
321	322	323	324	325	326	327	328
329	330	331	332	333	334	335	336
337	338	339	340	341	342	343	344
345	346	347	348	349	350	351	352
353	354	355	356	357	358	359	360
361	362	363	364	365	366	367	368
369	370	371	372	373	374	375	376
377	378	379	380	381	382	383	384
385	386	387	388	389	390	391	392
393	394	395	396	397	398	399	400

LONDON FOK					
COCOA		COFFEE		SUGAR (FOB)	
May	360-370	Jul	321-330	C Cessant	
Jun	360-369	Aug	321-330	Oct	171-171.0
Sept	328-327	May	345-345	Dec	174-174.0
Dec	367-365	Nov	370-378	Jan	175-175.0
Jan	367-365	Mar	378-378	Feb	175-175.0
May	721-719	May	378-378	Aug	177.0-176.0
Vol:	982	Vol:	3128	Vol:	391

LONDON GRAIN FUTURES					
WHEAT		BARLEY		H-PRO SUGA	
Cash	Cents	Cash	Cents	Cash	Cents
Jun	124.80	Sept	107.70	Jan	1350.30-1350.0
Oct	117.45	Dec	110.70	Apr	1350.30-1350.0
Nov	114.26	Jan	114.80	Oct	1350.30-1350.0
Dec	114.26	Feb	114.80	Dec	1350.30-1350.0
Jan	120.95	Mar	115.00	Jan	1350.30-1350.0
Vol:	395	Vol:	0	Vol:	46

LONDON POTATO FUTURES			
Average Dutch price at representative stations on May 21		Volume: 23	
Sept (s/tonne)	Open: 89.0	Cash:	90.0
Oct	89.5	Oct:	89.0
Nov	88.5	Nov:	86.5

WHEAT & LIVESTOCK COMMISSION			
Average Dutch price at representative stations on May 21			
Wheat		LIVESTOCK	
(s/100 lbs)	May	May	May
1st	85.51	Sheep	131.47
2nd	83.91	131.47	131.47
(H+)	-0.91	-30.48	-12.92
Grain/Wheat	88.91	180.48	112.92
3rd	82.41	-23.27	-12.92
(H+)	+5.1	+0.01	-19.2
Stockman	101	187.14	116.74
(H+)	-4.0	-22.95	-12.92
(H+)	12.5	-12.5	-42.4
Estimated cash average weight			

LONDON METAL EX			
Copper (Volume prev day)			
October (s/tonne)	Close: 1295.0-1298.0	May	1295.0-1298.0
June (s/tonne)	1295.0-1298.0	Oct	1295.0-1298.0
Sept (s/tonne)	1295.0-1298.0	Nov	1295.0-1298.0
Dec (s/tonne)	1295.0-1298.0	Dec	1295.0-1298.0
Jan (s/tonne)	1295.0-1298.0	Jan	1295.0-1298.0
Feb (s/tonne)	1295.0-1298.0	Feb	1295.0-1298.0
Mar (s/tonne)	1295.0-1298.0	Mar	1295.0-1298.0
Apr (s/tonne)	1295.0-1298.0	Apr	1295.0-1298.0
May (s/tonne)	1295.0-1298.0	May	1295.0-1298.0
June (s/tonne)	1295.0-1298.0	June	1295.0-1298.0
July (s/tonne)	1295.0-1298.0	July	1295.0-1298.0
Aug (s/tonne)	1295.0-1298.0	Aug	1295.0-1298.0
Sept (s/tonne)	1295.0-1298.0	Sept	1295.0-1298.0
Oct (s/tonne)	1295.0-1298.0	Oct	1295.0-1298.0
Nov (s/tonne)	1295.0-1298.0	Nov	1295.0-1298.0
Dec (s/tonne)	1295.0-1298.0	Dec	1295.0-1298.0
Jan (s/tonne)	1295.0-1298.0	Jan	1295.0-1298.0
Feb (s/tonne)	1295.0-1298.0	Feb	1295.0-1298.0
Mar (s/tonne)	1295.0-1298.0	Mar	1295.0-1298.0
Apr (s/tonne)	1295.0-1298.0	Apr	1295.0-1298.0
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July (s/tonne)	1295.0-1298.0	July	1295.0-1298.0
Aug (s/tonne)	1295.0-1298.0	Aug	1295.0-1298.0
Sept (s/tonne)	1295.0-1298.0	Sept	1295.0-1298.0
Oct (s/tonne)	1295.0-1298.0	Oct	1295.0-1298.0
Nov (s/tonne)	1295.0-1298.0	Nov	1295.0-1298.0
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Jan (s/tonne)	1295.0-1298.0	Jan	1295.0-1298.0
Feb (s/tonne)	1295.0-1298.0	Feb	1295.0-1298.0
Mar (s/tonne)	1295.0-1298.0	Mar	1295.0-1298.0
Apr (s/tonne)	1295.0-1298.0	Apr	1295.0-1298.0
May (s/tonne)	1295.0-1298.0	May	1295.0-1298.0

OILHON OIL REPORTS (PCS-LON) - London & Houston			
Another day of asset upward movement, but the market appeared to be content to trade in a narrow range.			
CRUDE OILS (Brent/Platt)			
Current Physical		18.20	+0.15
Next 15 day (Jun)		18.30	+0.10
Next 15 day (Jul)		19.30	+0.10
Texas Intermediate	Jun	21.10	+0.25
Texas Intermediate	Jul	21.10	+0.15
PRODUCTS (Brent/WTI (SMT)			
Spot Crk NW Europe (gross) delivery:			
Medium Gas 15	Black 244 (+2)	Off: 247 (+2)	
ES2		182.00	+0.25
on ES2 114 Jun	182 (+1)	184 (vst)	
on ES2 114 Jul	180 (-1)	181 (-1)	
on ES2 114 Aug	85 (vst)	86 (vst)	
on ES2 114 Sep	205 (+2)	210 (+2)	
PIPE TENDER			
GAS OIL			
Jun	180.00-91.75	Aug	181.25-80
Jul	174.50-76.00	Aug	182.00-80
Aug	177.75-77.50	Dec	194.00-80
Jul	178.00-80	Dec	178.00-80
BRIGHT			
Jun	18.25-18.50	Aug	18.45-18.55
Jul	18.25-18.50		Vol n/a
SUPPLY			
ONE Freight Futures Dry Cargo (\$/t/yr)			
my 91	High: 1745	Low: 1720	Cross: 1740
my 91	1771	2680	2705
my 91	1682	1540	1675
my 91	1670	1670	1670
Vol: 416 lots Open Interest: 2893			
Dry cargo index 1989 +14			
FUEL OIL INDEX			
Product Weight		PCX INDEX INDEX	
3000L	Vol: 694540	Open market	
51,000-331.50	51000	Bld Offer	
60,000-1036.50	77325	Jun	138.00 142.90
70,000-5765.00	10250	Jul	139.60 140.80
80,000-1319.00	475025	Aug	140.00 141.00
90,000-1140.00	20884	Vol	284

**IPE FUTURES
GAS OIL**

75-76.75	Oct	161.25 BID
76-77.00	Nov	163.00 BID
77-77.25	Dec	164.00 BID

Vol: 3198

18-18.95 Aug _____ 19.45-19.55
25-18.30 Vol n/a

SWPEX
Futures Dry Cargo (\$10/pt)
 12/13/85 12/14/85 12/15/85 12/16/85

1748	LOW: 1720	Close: 1740
1711	1800	1705
1682	1540	1676

1676 1655 1673
Open Interest: 2833
Strip Index 1899 +14

John Wall **FOX MOBILE INDEX**
 at 699450 **(SPM prices)**

51000		Bld	Offer
77325	Jun	139.80	140.30
10255	Jul	139.80	140.80

475825 Aug 140.00 141.00
20864 Vol 284

هكذا من الأصل

LONDON TRADED OPTIONS

Insurance companies

"value of a policy" embraced both the value of unexpired cover and liabilities accrued or contingent under a policy whether current or expired.

Paragraph 1 of the Schedule dealt with the amounts which fell due after the date of the winding-up order, and paragraph 2 dealt with policies providing for repayment of premium on early termination, and paragraph 3 was expressed to run from one fixed date to another, or where the policy was terminable by any party from a fixed date.

His Lordship concluded that the effect of rule 6 and the Schedule, read against the background of earlier law, seemed clear: amounts which had fallen due for payment did not require to be assessed, and did not come within the Schedule. The policy holder submitted his proof under the Insolvency Rules (SI 1986 No 1925).

Paragraph 1 of the Schedule dealt with the amounts of periodic payments after the winding up, and introduced a little more flexibility than before, while paragraph 2(a) dealt with liabilities in respect of unexpired periods of current policies, and introduced a new refinement in the case of terminable policies, and 2(b) dealt with all other forms of liability under policies current or expired which had not yet fallen due for payment.

That residuary clause enabled the Schedule to be exhaustive but without making any real claim of exclusivity. Paragraph 2(b) required the same "just estimate" of value as the general law, including, presumably, the principle of *in re Northern Counties of England Fire In-*

sure Co Ltd

substanting a radical change in the law by saying that the extent of the amounts which would have eliminated the great bulk of the scheme companies' liabilities most of which were contingent liabilities under occurrence or claims made policies, and the result would have been that companies which had gone into insolvent liquidation would emerge substantially solvent with a healthy surplus for their shareholders. The policy holders would be left entirely without the cover for which they contracted.

Accordingly, question 1 of the summons, which asked whether rule 6 and the Schedule provided a "complete and exhaustive code" for valuation of admissible claims, would be answered "Yes" save in relation to amounts which had fallen due for payment.

Question 2 asked whether various claims listed in a schedule to the summons would come within paragraph 1 of Schedule 1, and if so whether under sub-paragraphs (a) or (b).

The list included claims which might be pending under occurrence or claims made insurance policies. All of those would, if current, give rise to claims for loss of cover in respect of future occurrences or claims made, which had been made under paragraph 2(a), and, whether current or expired, might give rise to claims in respect of past occurrences or claims made, which had to be valued under 2(b).

There was no suggestion that contracts of reinsurance were in that respect different from primary insurance contracts.

Solicitors: Freshfields; Herbert Smith; Freshfields; Herbert Smith.

THE PRESIDENT said that the girl, now aged eight, had Lordship's opinion, were right to refuse access to the mother.

born with foster parents since September 1987 and a care order had been granted to the local authority in June 1988.

The mother had been allowed supervised access to her child, but this had been terminated formally on February 3, 1989.

All the parties accepted that adoption was in the best interests of the child and that the present foster parents were suitable prospective adoptive parents.

The justices had considered the matter carefully and, in his

However, they had adopted an ambivalent approach in that they had gone on to order contact by correspondence from the child's birth mother, Mrs. C. That form of contact was a matter for the local authority.

It was to be observed that justice was wider powers under the Children Act 1989 when that Act came into force in October 1991.

In the absence of a cross appeal by the local authority, the court has no alternative but to allow the appeal and remit the case to the justices.

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How the Iron Lady sparked a revival



TEESIDE DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION

It was four years ago that Margaret Thatcher launched her campaign to revive the inner cities with a walk (left) beside the

River Tees. Her own fortunes may have declined, but the region's regeneration has continued. Peter Davenport reports

When Michael Heseltine, the environment secretary, arrives today to view the progress of the Teesside Development Corporation he will be greeted by a sight vastly different from that which confronted Margaret Thatcher when she took her "walk in the wilderness" to launch the government's campaign to regenerate the inner cities.

Four years ago, Mrs Thatcher walked through an expanse of weeds and industrial dereliction on the site of a former engineering plant on the banks of the River Tees. The development corporation, created a few months earlier and consisting, on that day, of its chief executive and two staff members, was just beginning to appreciate the enormous task it faced in reviving 12,000 acres of blighted land in one of Britain's most socially and industrially depressed areas.

The corporation faced perhaps the most arduous task of any of the development corporations set up by the government to tackle the problems of decay and disadvantage in towns and cities.

Today, Mr Heseltine, who played a small part in Mrs Thatcher's downfall, will see the impressive progress being made towards the goals she outlined. He will turn his hand to a variety of ceremonies marking important stages of development.

Ambitious works are under way across the development corporation's 19 square miles. Cranes dominate a landscape filled with bulldozers, earthmoving equipment and the bustle of the site.

Teesside, the venue for Mrs Thatcher's "wilderness walk", is now the largest of the corporation's flagship schemes, a £500 million, mixed-use development that is three times larger than Canary Wharf in London Docklands and is expected to create 8,000 jobs. A £160 million marina is well under way in Hartlepool and leading retailers are moving into the £80 million Teesside Park retail park on the former Stockton racetrack.

The corporation has spent £160 million generating almost half a billion pounds of private-sector investment. When its seven-year lifespan is up, the corporation will have invested £300 million of government funds and attracted more than £1 billion.

More than 100 companies have moved in or expanded in the area, creating 3,800 jobs and a further 5,000 are in the pipeline. Thousands more jobs are expected to be provided by projects that are not yet complete.

Only five years ago, unemployment in Cleveland, the county that has Teesside at its heart, stood at a disastrous 22 per cent; today, the level is down to 14.5 per cent. This is still almost twice the national figure, however.

Although the area is coping with the national recession better than previously, the jobless rate is beginning to edge upwards again, and male unemployment remains about 20 per cent and higher in some depressed pockets.

There have been changes in the way Teesside is viewed by industry and investors throughout Britain, however, and the area has a renewed confidence matched by its improving physical environment. The corporation says all its schemes have attracted private-sector investment.

Mr Heseltine will hear about other important projects aimed at continuing that progress. These include a £50 million Tees barrage scheme to create a clean, tide-free setting for waterports and recreation. The contract is expected to be awarded to a large national company soon.

Like other development corporations, the Teesside authority



Step ahead: Teesside, the site of Mrs Thatcher's walk, is now a £500 million project that is three times larger than the Canary Wharf development in the London Docklands

has been accused of creating "cittis" developments, steam-rolling elected local councils and spending vast amounts with insufficient jobs in return.

Duncan Hall, the corporation's chief executive, says the number and scale of developments now "coming out of the ground" are an answer to the criticisms.

The development has been a personal crusade for Mr Hall, who was born in Middlesbrough and returned home from his post as the chief executive in Corby, Northamptonshire, where he had played a central role in the struggle

to revive that community after the closure of its steelworks in 1979.

He says part of the answer was to diversify a local economy that depended too heavily on key industries such as chemicals, steel and heavy engineering, all of which had declined.

Although the presence of British Steel and ICI remain important to Teesside, the economic base has been widened to such an extent that it has been able to ride the national recession in a way unthinkable a decade ago.

Mr Hall says: "We needed an uplift in the business and invest-

ment confidence in the area. Self-confidence had also been affected by a degree of cynicism created by many years in which the great aspirations for Teesside had not been realised. The scale of the problem was enormous," he adds.

"In 19 square miles, with less than 1,000 people living there, you had the heart of a large conurbation that was bereft of people and bereft of significant development. Any individual scheme was not going to solve the problems of rejuvenation."

"The essence was to do the whole lot, a totally mixed dev-

elopment, all in one go, ranging from attracting an expansion of the offshore industry to building a retail park, to putting in one of the largest-ever leisure complexes to building a river barrage, from new leisure and amenity facilities to high-quality offices, to providing a range of social and private housing so that people could live, play and work in a quality environment."

He says the initial commitment to the area by Mrs Thatcher was "fundamental" to its success. "After four years we are more than halfway there," he says. "There is no doubt now that we can achieve

the development. There is no doubt we have levered in significant investment and that more will follow."

All the planned developments can be achieved within the corporation's original seven-year lifespan, he says. The government is looking at the future for development corporations and he believes there is a strong case for giving the organisation on Teesside a further period of life.

"Future generations can look forward to the range of opportunities available to them and that is a profound change."



Wilderness comes to life

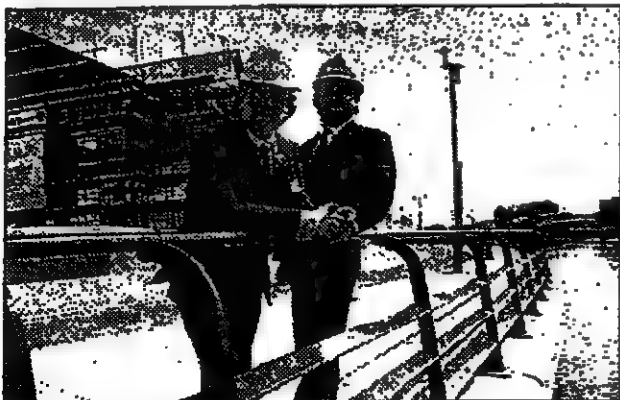
Out of dereliction arise offices, homes, shops, and riverside parks

From the front seat of David Colley's Land Rover as it criss-crosses the sprawling Teesside development site, it is almost impossible to appreciate the scale of the project. Only when Mr Colley, who is the site engineer, steers his vehicle to the top of an enormous mound of earth can the visitor start to appreciate the size of the undertaking (Peter Davenport writes).

Four years ago, when Margaret Thatcher started a campaign to regenerate Britain's inner cities, the 250-acre development site between Stockton and Middlesbrough was derelict industrial land.

Today, it is a £500 million scheme, the biggest of the Teesside Development Corporation.

Mr Colley, of Crouch, Hogg and Waterman, a consultant engineering company, is work-



Site check: David Colley (right), the engineer, and Duncan Hall of Teesside Development Corporation

ing, with his team, from temporary offices in the middle of the building site. The scheme is led by a partnership of the corporation and Murray BS, a joint company owned by Murray International Holdings, of Edinburgh, and the Bank of Scotland.

Acquiring, clearing and preparing the site has cost more than £60 million.

Mr Colley says: "The scale of this project and the fact that it has been the policy of the development corporation not to use its powers of compul-

sory purchase have made it a difficult task. We have had to work around existing tenants while large areas of the site have been open to the public."

A £50 million barrage on the River Tees will provide clean, tide-free water for sporting and recreational use, tree-lined canals are being created and there will be ten bridges on the site, three river crossings, a viaduct and more than three miles of riverside walkways, making the area an environmental attraction.

A cantilevered shopping bridge will link Teesside with Stockton high street on the opposite bank of the river, and a £12 million A66 interchange connects the site to the Teesside park leisure-retail development on the former Stockton racetrack.

Teesside is a mixed-use development, comprising offices, houses and apartments, shops, leisure facilities and social amenities. Murray BS is completing a £10 million development of 100,000 sq ft of office space at Dunsdin House on the Tees, where rents of £12 a square foot are being obtained. Although low by national standards, the figure is the highest ever on Teesside, and is an indication of continuing commercial interest.

Wimpey is building 128 homes, priced from £55,000 to £113,000. There will be sheltered accommodation, and an Alzheimer's residential centre being built by the Alzheimer's Disease Society will provide 25 day places and 36 beds. The development is due to be completed within the next three years.

Leisure and pleasure to lure shoppers

TEESSIDE Park will provide 500,000 sq ft of shopping space and a £25 million indoor leisure centre which, the developers say, will be the largest of its kind in Britain.

The site, the former Stockton racetrack, sandwiched by a junction of the main A19 and A66 roads, covers more

than 100 acres. The £80 million park, due for completion in September, has attracted leading retailers. The toy chain Toys 'R' Us and ELS, a furniture retailer, are already open. They will soon be joined by Iceland Frozen Foods, Comet, Morrisons, the supermarket group, Pound-

stretcher, British Gas, and a W.H. Smith Do It All.

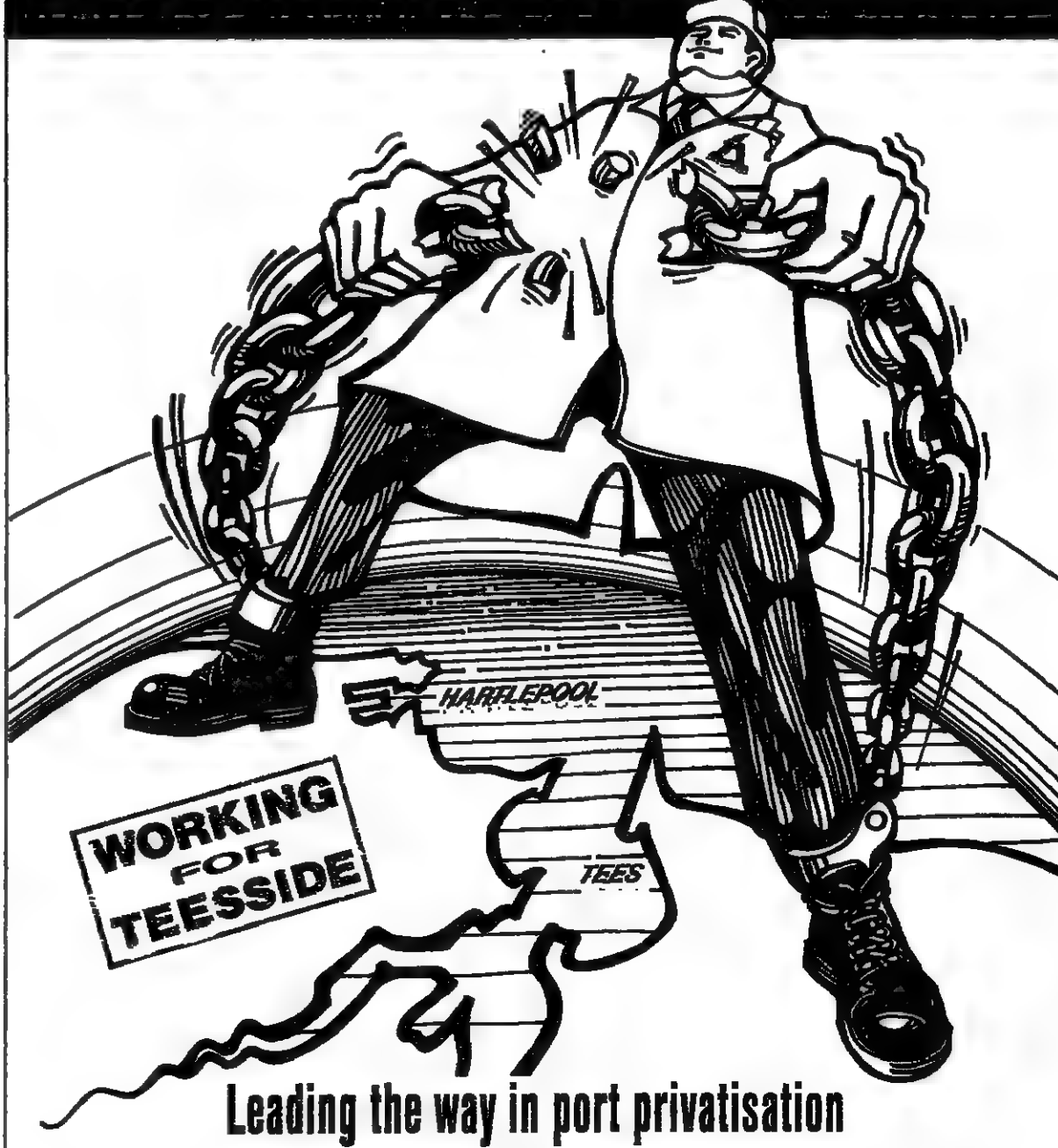
The indoor leisure complex includes a ten-screen multiplex cinema, a tenpin bowling alley, roller skating, a wine bar, restaurants and fast-food outlets. Parking for up to 2,000 cars is being provided.

A new £12 million inter-

change on the A66 will improve access to the park, and there will also be a road bridge link to the Teesside development.

Preparatory work on the bridge involved diverting a main sewer and miners had to tunnel 20ft underground to install new piping.

A NEW MOVING FORCE IS RELEASED



The ending of the Dock Labour Scheme and the Ports Bill currently before Parliament are two Government measures that are releasing the trust and municipal ports of the UK to exploit to the full their pent up energies, expertise and assets.

Those who choose the liberating road of privatisation will be ready to take their rightful place in the 1992 economic and commercial scene as dynamic, broad-based, integrated transport businesses.

In the van of the dash for freedom is the Tees & Hartlepool Port Authority. With a new concept labour force making remarkable productivity gains. With a £30 million programme doubling Teesport Container and Ro/Ro capacity, and making Hartlepool the best port of its kind on the North East coast. With a drive into the wider distribution

and transport business. With a strong property portfolio under active development.

Even under constraint, Tees & Hartlepool has established itself as the UK's second busiest port and has increased tonnage handled every year for the past five years. In joint venture flagship schemes with Teesside Development Corporation it is making its own contribution to the regeneration of the North East.

Freed of constraint, it will be poised to build swiftly on its considerable strengths and play a leading role in the transformation of the UK ports industry.

Tees & Hartlepool Port Authority, Queens Square, Middlesbrough, Cleveland TS2 1AH.

TEES/SIDE Initiative Talent Ability



Tees & Hartlepool Port Authority

Discovering the catalyst for new prosperity

In the environment-conscious Nineties, Teesside is wooing new, 'greener' chemical industries, Chris Tighe reports

Most first-time visitors to Teesside are astounded at the vista of distillation columns, furnaces and pipework that spreads out before them. While they regard products such as plastic carrier bags, detergents, nylon, cars, antifreeze and cosmetics as part of their everyday life, many are unaware of the scale of ICI's Teesside operations, where raw materials for these goods are made.

In fact, Teesside has ICI's highest concentration of manufacturing assets anywhere in the world, a network of industrial plants worth £4.5 billion, and producing about eight million tonnes of chemicals a year, with a value of more than £2.5 billion.

ICI's presence began in 1917 when the ministry of munitions asked Brunner Mond, one of four companies that merged in 1926 to create Imperial Chemical Industries, to set up a factory to produce nitrogen for explosives.

Brunner Mond suggested Billingham, on the north bank

of the Tees, and after the first world war bought the site and developed its synthetic ammonia and nitrates subsidiary.

Since then the Billingham site has become a huge manufacturing centre, making ammonia, general chemicals, fertilisers, acrylics and advanced materials. In the Thir-

"The production of high-value chemicals offers the best prospect of growth"

ties, Perspex was developed there. Biopol, a degradable plastic created by ICI's Billingham-based Biological Products business, was started just last year.

As ICI's Teesside activities expanded, it developed both its North Tees site, near

Billingham, where crude oil from North Sea oil fields is refined and "aromatic" raw chemicals are made, and also its huge petrochemical centre at Wilton, on the south side of the Tees.

Today, ICI contributes £400 million a year to the Teesside economy through wages, pensions, rates and local purchasing. It employs 11,500 people.

Although still a huge employer on Teesside, ICI has contracted; before the 1979-81 recession took its toll, it had twice as many employees in the area as today and in the Sixties, 30,000 people were on its payroll.

An announcement last July that it was selling off its Billingham-based UK fertiliser business was a serious blow to Teesside. The subsequent intervention of the Mergers and Monopolies Commission in the proposed sale of part of the business to Kemira Oy of Finland means that ammonium nitrate fertiliser is still being made at Billingham, but the closure of other parts of the fertiliser



Heart of ICI: Sandy Anderson, the ICI Teesside operations manager, at the olefines plant. Teesside is the main complex for the chemicals giant

business has cost about 570 jobs.

The cuts have taught Teesside that it cannot rely on a single big employer. Stiff international competition in the chemical and petrochemical sector and the shift towards more capital-intensive production have also sparked a realisation that it is the production of fine, high-value chemicals, rather than bulk tonnage, that offers the best prospect of growth.

Teesside's familiarity with chemicals and petrochemicals is a strong marketing asset, but the area has also woken up in recent years to the industry's environmental costs.

Such concern has produced positive benefits for the area: ICI scientists on Teesside are pioneering environmentally safe products, and after years of debate, an agreement has been reached between industry, planners and environmentalists that will protect unclaimed areas of Seal Sands and its breeding colony of seals.

ICI is placing great emphasis on improving its environmental performance. On Teesside, more than £80 million was earmarked in 1990 for environmental improvements.

Since the Seventies ICI has reduced the oxygen-reducing

waste entering the Tees by 75 per cent; migratory fish are returning to the river's upper reaches for the first time in 50 years.

Despite the problems of reconciling industrial and environmental concerns, Teesside would be foolish to turn its back on a sector in which it has expertise and an existing infrastructure, says Peter Watson, the Teesside Development Corporation's marketing director.

The TDC, which has promoted Teesside as a European chemicals centre, is wooing several Japanese chemical companies. "This is one of the few places left in Europe

which can accommodate them," Mr Watson says.

Winning new projects takes time because chemical industry investments are large and environmentally sensitive, he says. Last year, the Norwegian company Dynochem set up a £6.5 million plant on a former ICI site in Billingham, creating 25 jobs, and the TDC is optimistic that the ICI's 250 acre process plant park nearby will attract speciality chemicals firms.

The German-owned intermediate chemicals producer BASF last year opened a £6 million research and development centre at its Seal Sands base.

By far the most important new chemical industry investment is by the British company MTM, which is building a £160 million European production and technology centre at Teesport on a former refinery site. The investment will create 1,000 jobs.

Even this project is dwarfed by the scale of the million pound gas-fired combined heat and power station proposed by ICI and Enron Power (UK) for land at ICI Wilton. This £600 million plant would be fed by a gas pipeline from new North Sea gas fields to Teesside, and would add about 3 per cent to the UK's generating capacity.

"Belasis Park continues to expand," says George Hunter



George Hunter, Chief Executive of Belasis Hall Technology Park, explains:

"Much has happened since we opened the Park in the spring of 1988 and we now have over forty companies at Belasis, all engaged in clean, high-tech and knowledge based activities. The first stage of development covers fifty acres and provides a wide range of accommodation including small and medium sized offices and individual pavilions as large as 20,000 sq ft. The offices can be rented; pavilions can be leased or purchased.

The new Belasis Business Centre has become very popular, both for its high class accommodation and its elegant restaurant. The restaurant is an important addition to the Park's facilities and is becoming increasingly popular with the local business community.

We have just completed the infrastructure for the second development stage of the Park and landscaped a further sixty-four acres with lakes, embankments, footpaths and extensive planting. This site has been created for companies who wish to build their own property in a prestigious, landscaped setting.

Belasis is an ideal location for companies who want first class accommodation in quiet, pleasant surroundings. We have good road access, plenty of car parking space and access to many of the services and facilities of ICI. So why not join us at Belasis? We have a lot to offer. And it's a great place to work!"

Clip out the coupon for more good news about Belasis

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BELASIS HALL TECHNOLOGY PARK

Details please of Belasis Hall

Name
Company
Address

Send to George Hunter, Chief Executive
Belasis Hall Technology Park Ltd., Greenwood Road
Billingham, Cleveland TS23 4AZ

T/M/91

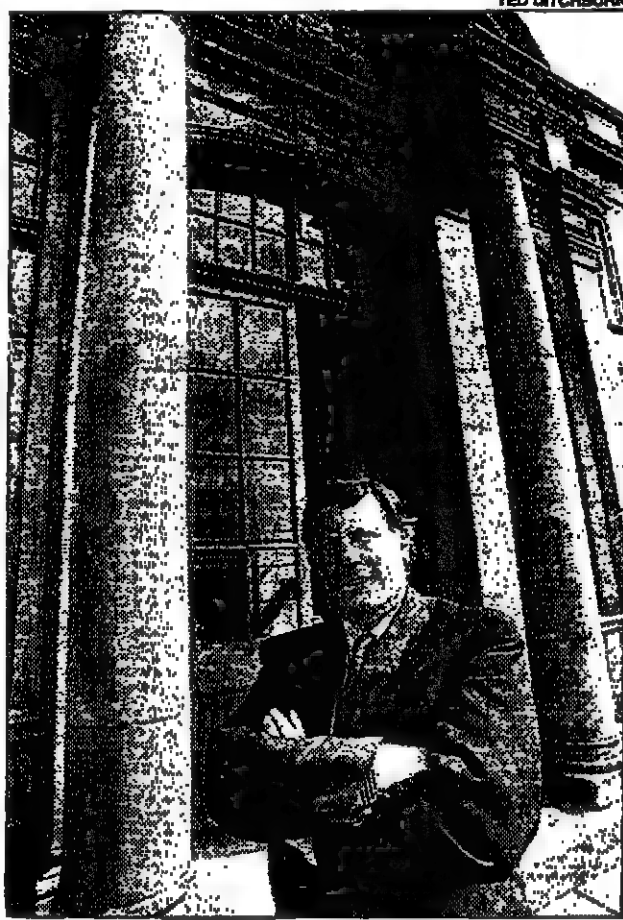
Worldwide company stays loyal

A chemicals group is expanding at its Teesside home

ONE of the European chemical industry's most dynamic companies is a Teesside enterprise. MTM has grown in 12 years from a small business with big ambitions to an international chemicals company with more than 1,000 employees in 26 locations, an expected 1991 turnover of £130 million and shares valued at more than £200 million on the London stock market (Chris Tighe writes).

MTM, founded by two chemical industry managers, has prospered by producing high-value chemicals for specific customers and acquiring other companies, including the American Hardwicke Chemical Company, bought in December for \$112 million (£64 million).

MTM nevertheless remains committed to Teesside. The company is investing £100 million in one of Teesside's biggest recent industrial developments, a 1,000-job European production and technology centre on a 40-acre oil refinery site at Teesport. The first MTM building in the scheme was opened last



Richard Lines: keen to share success with Teesside

month by Margaret Thatcher. "Our company is one of the fastest-growing manufacturing businesses in the UK and we were keen to share some of that success with Teesside," says MTM's chairman and co-founder, Richard Lines. The company, which last year had £13.6 million pre-tax profits on an £85 million turnover, is admired locally even by those who say the area has been a soft touch for pollutant industry. "Cleveland has got to attract the right kind of chemical industry," says David Walsh, the county council's economic development and transportation committee chairman. "MTM is a model for the future."

Power plant to challenge giants

Teesside is to have a £700m gas-fired station using the latest technology

ONE of the world's largest gas-fired power stations is to come into operation at Wilton by April 1993. The £700 million project being built by Enron Power (UK) will use combined cycle technology, in which energy entering the plant passes through two power generating cycles (Ronald Faux writes).

The project will be operated by Teesside Power, a company formed by Enron, Central Power, Northern Electric (Generation), South Western Power and South Wales Generating. Enron owns the largest natural gas pipeline system in the United States.

Gas from the North Sea Everest and Lomond fields, supplied by Amoco and British Gas, will be piped to the plant, which is seen as a challenge to the duopoly of National Power and PowerGen.

ICI, which will be a neighbour to the new plant, will take 15 per cent of its 1,725 megawatt capacity and steam for its Teesside plants, in particular the Wilton nylon factory.

The plant has the advantage of producing both power and heat from one fuel source. The

designers say this helps to conserve natural resources while generating energy at a competitive cost.

The plant will be on 23 acres alongside ICI's 2,000 acre site and ranks as a low hazard installation. No fuels will be stored there, the only liquid discharges will be cooling water and hardly any solid waste will result. Power not used locally will go into the national grid. The plant will make possible a large natural gas pipeline landing in Teesside, the Gas Council and Amoco Hess. Only 20 per cent of the new gas supply will go to the power plant, releasing large amounts of competitively priced gas for Teesside's expanding industries.

Enron says environmental advantages are as important as economic benefits when electricity is produced by gas-fired combined cycle technology. The company says: "Natural gas is the cleanest-burning fossil fuel. It produces virtually no sulphur dioxide or ash and far smaller quantities of nitrogen oxides and carbon dioxide per kilowatt hour than any of the competing technologies."

The benefits of a big brother

Creating 5,000 jobs to broaden Teesside's potentially vulnerable economic base by the year 2000 is the challenge facing the Belasis Hall Technology Park at Billingham (Chris Tighe writes).

ICI, co-founder with English Estates of the Belasis development, employs thousands of people at its Teesside sites in huge industrial plants, a dramatic contrast to the park's red-brick, low-rise pavilions.

The scale of employment is in sharp contrast, too; the biggest company at the park has only 50 employees, and many of its neighbours have fewer than a dozen.

ICI and English Estates hope, however, that this plethora of small firms will help

Small firms draw strength from their proximity to the ICI development, and the golf club's not bad either

Teesside lessen its dependence on heavy industry. But the aim of the 167-acre park is not to turn its back on the area's traditional strengths; in fact, one of Belasis Hall's main selling points is the access it offers to ICI's resources on Teesside, the company's largest concentration of manufacturing assets in the world.

The mood of the park's managers, three years after the first tenants moved in, is optimistic. The development of the 58-acre first stage has been two years quicker than

expected, and the park is now home to 46 companies. "Changing the industrial base is the main thing, by moving towards the high technology-centred industries which are less affected by perturbations in the economy," says George Hunter, an ICI manager and the park's chief executive.

The recession has meant fewer enquiries about locating there, but since the start of the year four companies have more than doubled their space to expand their businesses. And in the three years since

companies began setting up there, only two have failed. English Estates, like ICI an important force in the north-east economy for more than 50 years, has built 15 pavilions totalling 137,000 sq ft at the park.

There is private sector development, too: Foster Church is building a 100,000 sq ft business centre for 100 companies and a restaurant, shops and conference facilities.

Eighty per cent of the site is given over to landscaping, one of the highest ratios of any UK science park. And all the larger units have been developed with adjacent vacant plots of land, earmarked for possible expansion.

Belasis Hall is keen to encourage its companies to capitalise on their proximity

to ICI; there is "plenty of scope for synergy", says Mr Hunter. Some tenants are tapping into ICI's sizeable Research and Development operations on Teesside. Many of the small companies setting up at Belasis Hall have welcomed the free access it offers to ICI's golf and social clubs.

Development starts later this year on the second, 60-acre stage of the science park, comprising a hotel, conference centre and lake. But Billingham's "Belasis Triangle" includes another key area - the ICI Process Plant Park, a fully serviced 250 acre site no longer needed by ICI.

The site offers speciality chemicals companies the chance to build their own plants with minimal infrastructure overheads.

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Port sees smooth sailing ahead

As a channel for European trade the Tees expects to gain in importance in the free market of 1992. The Tees and Hartlepool Port Authority has reason to feel satisfied with progress since the shackles of the dock labour scheme were removed. According to John Hackney, the chief executive, only the port of London handles a bigger tonnage, and few ports are more profitable. The authority is eager to enjoy the freedom of becoming privatised, and it was a bitter disappointment when, last year, the private bill to reconstitute the authority as a company with full commercial powers failed at the House of Lords select committee stage, despite having completed its passage through the Commons. He says: "The 1966 act under which we operate is limiting, allowing us to invest only in the Tees and Hartlepool," Mr Hackney says. "We have spent £30 million on improving facilities and installing some of the most advanced handling equipment in Europe. That work is basically completed yet we still have £20 million available. It is difficult

The Tees and Hartlepool Port Authority argues that privatisation is the key to a profitable future but not everybody agrees. Ronald Faux reports

to find projects to spend it on. We could equip the port with gold-plated cranes but we could not buy a fish and chip shop outside the Tees. Privatisation is very necessary." With more freedom, this embarrassment of riches could allow the authority to spread its investment in other ports, or in such areas as distribution services or property. But privatisation is opposed by trades unions, local authorities and a strong body of local people on the grounds that profits made locally should be invested locally. The authority now pins its hopes on separate legislation under which privatisation of trust ports with a turnover of more than £5 million would be allowed. This, it is claimed, would allow the Tees to compete effectively with the Channel tunnel and with other container ports closer to European markets. Mr Hackney says that although

the dock labour scheme has gone, reducing the workforce from more than 1,000 to about 650, competition for business means that rates within the docks are tight and it is the customers who have benefited most. The £30 million investment over the past two years has doubled the roll-on roll-off and lift-on lift-off capacity in preparation for 1992. The port is fortunate to have some large and virtually captive customers to satisfy: British Steel, ICI and Phillips Norsea have private terminals on the river and provide most of the tonnage. Last year, 40 million tons were handled, resulting in an operating profit of about £12 million. Recent industry appearing in the region, in particular the Nissan car plant at Washington, has added to the flood of exports. More than 100,000 vehicles a year pass through the



John Hackney: good progress dock from the Nissan car compound on the adjoining Teesport estate and the expectation is that exports could grow to 250,000 a year. As the Nissan cars depart from the Tees, the docks in Hartlepool handle an equal number of Citroën, Peugeot, Ford and General Motors models imported for the British market. Steel, chemicals, scrap, coal, and timber products form the bulk cargoes, but the jewel in the Teesport crown is acknowledged to

be the container terminal extension opened earlier this year, providing capacity for 50,000 more containers a year. The Tees Offshore Base is operated by the authority from a joint initiative with the Teesside Development Corporation. The project, dominated by the most powerful heavy lift crane on the river, is a development and co-ordination centre for the exploration and management of hydrocarbon, the area of the earth's surface covered by rocks. The project is long-term, but Mr Hackney acknowledges that the more immediate future of the port is linked inevitably to the health of the three main customers. He says: "If they are strong over the next ten years or so, we will be strong, but it remains important to broaden our business base so if there are any unexpected casualties the blow will be less damaging." The port's experience of industrial giants left the authority slightly wary. Once there were four giants on Teesside, reduced to three when Shell departed — with one day's notice.



Well placed: Pat Keating, the manager of the marina

Marina offers the luxury of revival

Hartlepool hopes to reverse decline by rejuvenating its redundant docks

The announcement, two years ago, that a £160 million marina was to be developed in Hartlepool, backed by the largest urban regeneration grant then awarded by the government, produced a predictable, if cynical, response. Many people asked why money should be used to create an elaborate marina in a town that was long past its heyday. Such comments missed the point (Peter Davenport writes). The 450-berth marina, one of the main projects of the Teesside Development Corporation, was more than a luxury, it was a symbol of the regeneration of the town. The marina is a pet project for Ron Norman, the chairman of the corporation. He has lived in the area for many years since moving from the southeast, and was behind two earlier attempts to build a marina. Mr Norman says the marina development goes against the national property recession. He believes the marina, when complete, will make Hartlepool one of the most attractive towns on the northeast coast and help to bring investment to counter two decades of decline. Two of the firms involved in the scheme have fallen victim to a slump in the construction industry, but work has continued. Hartlepool council supports the project. As part of the scheme, the corporation is building a new £13 million deep-water cargo quay for the Tees and Hartlepool Port Authority. The quay will handle vessels of up to 30,000 tons and replaces an ageing dock, which has become part of the marina development. Writing in the strategic plan document, Brian Dinsdale, the council's chief executive, says: "A sense of pride in Hartlepool, its heritage and its future represent a fundamental ingredient towards a successful economy." The new marina is expected to become part of the everyday life of the town and not just an adjunct for the affluent. Much of the work so far has gone into massive infrastructure and reclamation schemes, restoring dock walls, installing new lock gates and building sea defences; the essential, if unglamorous, part of the development. Plans for the former south docks include 1,500 new homes, and shops, pubs, restaurants, a business park and a maritime heritage centre. There will be permanent facilities for ship restoration, an industry the town has made its own since the acclaimed work on HMS Warrior, an old iron-clad battleship. Earlier this year, the first housing on the marina, Warrior Quay, was officially opened by Sir George Younger, the housing minister. The 106 homes consist of flats costing from £51,500 to £128,000 and four-bedroom houses from £107,000. At present, 82 of the projected 450 berths have been completed and 52 have been bought by boat-owners, mainly from the immediate area. Pat Keating, the marina manager, says Hartlepool, located between the facilities at Hull to the south and Amble to the north, is well-placed to appeal to boating enthusiasts.

Profitability lifts off at airport

THE first question companies investing in Teesside ask is "How do we get in and out?" says Ike Dawson, the managing director of Teesside International Airport, whose job has been to turn the local airport at Middleton St George into a springboard for worldwide business and tourist travel. "We provide an essential service to the region," Mr Dawson says. "The links to London and the other centres we serve are an important part of the attraction to Japanese and other companies that have moved here."

The airport is owned and controlled by the local community, with Cleveland and Durham county councils holding the share capital. The number of flights and passengers reached a record last year. Customers range from business executives to holidaymakers and oil industry workers. About £2.5 million has been spent on airport improvements in the last couple of years, including the Diamond Club lounge for regular British Midland passengers, VIP lounge and Diamond service lounge.

Daily scheduled flights from Teesside include those to Heathrow, Amsterdam, Bergen, Norwich and Stavanger. A twice-daily, 75-minute service reopened recently to London Gatwick, operated by Aberdeen Airways. The British Midland service to London Heathrow which began 21 years ago offers five flights a day in each direction using DC9 and Boeing 737 aircraft. More than 200,000 passengers a year use the route. Dan Air flies a number of holiday charters from Teesside, with Spain and the Balearic Islands the main

destinations, and a daily schedule to Amsterdam and Berlin using BAe 146 and Boeing 737 aircraft. The airport is an important centre for air freight with a catchment area extending into central Scotland and south towards a line between Manchester and Lincoln. More than half a dozen freight forwarders operate from the airport. Recently, after much lobbying, the airport won the right to sell duty-free goods, but the privilege is likely to be lost under EC rules governing the single European market.



All-clear for takeoff: Ike Dawson, the managing director of Teesside International Airport, says it achieved record numbers of flights and passengers in the last year

Poly with degree of success

Teesside is a conurbation steeped in high technology. Curiously, however, the region does not have a university to teach, study and develop skills acknowledged to be nationally vital (Ronald Faux writes). Indeed, Teesside ranks as the largest industrial conurbation in Europe not to have its own university. What Teesside has is a polytechnic held in such high regard that it has been awarded delegated powers to confer degrees. As Teesside polytechnic celebrates 21 years of academic achievement, a record number of 7,150 students is embarking on full and part-time courses. Earlier this year, the Middlebrough-based polytechnic was among the first higher education institutions to be given delegated authority from the Council for National Academic Awards to approve and sign examination lists. Dr Oliver Coulthard, the deputy director, says the three notable academic areas in which the polytechnic has been recognised by the Polytechnics and Colleges Funding Council (PCFC) are in computing, design and chemical engineering.

As student numbers rise, the local polytechnic forges links with industry

A 17 per cent rise in student numbers this year followed the staggering 69 per cent increase last year, probably the highest of any British polytechnic. The numbers funded through the PCFC also increased by more than 1,500 to 6,929. The contribution made by the institution to the industrial and commercial rejuvenation of Cleveland and the northeast is significant. The most recent examples are in collaborative work with Davy McKee, manufacturers of the world's biggest blast furnaces, and BASF, a leading German-owned chemical manufacturer on Teesside. The two ventures, known as project clinics, produced valuable results. Davy McKee sought a rapid method of measuring the sulphur content in molten metal in a blast furnace. It is a crucial measurement because sulphur, if not removed, affects the quality of the final product. Current methods lack the required accuracy and are

time-consuming and costly. The steel industry itself failed to produce a cost-effective solution. Teesside students devised a method that meets the criteria, producing results in less than a minute against the 30 minutes needed in normal methods. Davy McKee was so impressed it hopes to develop, manufacture and market the device worldwide. The company plans to sponsor more

project clinics to strengthen the link between industry and academia. The BASF project has produced an evaluation and preliminary solution to improve vent arrangements in storage tanks. Another bright idea prompted the Post Office to invite an industrial design student to develop his ideas for making a fax machine as publicly available as the telephone. Prototypes are undergoing summer tests at Post Office service centres throughout Britain. If successful, the design is expected to go into production.

People power behind high-tech revolution

THE standard of teaching and training will ultimately determine a region's prosperity. In Teesside, where a miniature industrial revolution has happened in recent years with the change from heavy manual industry to sophisticated technology, people and the quality of their training have acquired the greatest importance (Ronald Faux writes). The Teesside Training and Enterprise Council (TEC) had this in mind just over a year ago when it assumed many employment department responsibilities. Les Bell, the Teesside TEC chairman, says that in the first year consultative links, or partnerships, have been established with busi-

nesses and educational bodies. Many training and enterprise schemes have been reviewed and redesigned. He says: "The main challenge still is to create a culture in which training is accepted without question as an essential part of every organisation's business plan and where training is seen as an investment." "The real challenge is to maintain confidence in the fundamental necessity of continued investment in people." Teesside TEC was set up with total local funding of £31.3 million, shared among youth and adult training, business and enterprise training and local initiatives.

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Far Eastern promise gives fresh hope

Foreign companies using the northeast as a launchpad into Europe are reviving the local economy, Chris Tighe reports

Iron and steel, heavy engineering, shipbuilding and chemicals gave Teesside a worldwide reputation as one of the great centres of British industry. Chemical and steel production and engineering are still the backbone of the area's economy, but although such industries are at the forefront of change and innovation, Teesside is also trying to diversify its economy by attracting new companies, and developing existing businesses and inward investment.

Cleveland county council's economic strategy document records a decline in manufacturing employment in the county from 105,500 jobs in 1975 to 55,000 in 1988, but it predicts an increase to 56,900 by 1996, partly because of the growth in making goods for consumer markets.

Examples of this trend include the arrival of several Far Eastern companies, such as Japan's Sanyo, which has set up Europe's first magnetron plant, a key component in microwave ovens, at Thornaby, Cleveland, where Tabuchi, a Japanese transformer maker, is also based.

Swilynn, the Hong Kong-based videotape manufacturer, has a factory in Hartlepool, and Samsung

Electronics, one of Britain's few South Korean investors, has a video recorder and microwave oven factory at Billingham.

Last November, Integral, of Dallas, opened the biggest American factory development in Teesside for many years. The Middlesbrough plant, making cabling systems and employing 22 people, is

The recent wave of investments, particularly from abroad, may prove to be more enduring

Integral's European manufacturing headquarters.

In the past, some investments in the area have been vulnerable to the "branch plant" syndrome, with companies pulling out in response to economic downturns. The recent wave of investments geared to supplying continental markets may prove more enduring. And Peter Crowe, the chief executive of Teesside chamber of com-

merce, trade and industry, says: "The Japanese and Koreans take the long view, having committed themselves they don't change their mind."

Inward investment, according to the county council's economic strategy review, remains the most effective way to create significant numbers of jobs quickly but is by itself unlikely to lead to the economic restructuring the county needs. It adds that the predominance of large companies has traditionally led to an expectation of employment, rather than entrepreneurial self-employment.

As well as producing jobs fast, inward investment also offers hope of diversifying the jobs market by increasing the stock of higher grade employment. That is one of the attractions for Cleveland of the Ministry of Defence's proposed move of its Quality Assurance Unit from Woolwich and Bromley to Preston Farm, Stockton, where it would employ 1,500 people.

The move was announced two years ago but the government has recently been re-evaluating it as part of its defence spending review. The threat that the move could be scrapped or cut back has alarmed Cleveland's job creation agencies and politicians.

The Teesside Development Corporation, which is among those lobbying for the move, estimates it has helped to attract 3,000 jobs to the county in the last three years, by helping 110 companies. This includes inward investments, relocations and expansions.

Among the attractions of Cleveland for potential investors is its access to European funds to assist areas hit by decline in traditional industries.

The county's location beside the North Sea is also important in generating jobs,

and should become increasingly so with the advent of the single European market.

The Tees and Hartlepool Port Authority is second only to London in gross tonnage, due partly to the piping to Teesside of North Sea oil and gas exploration has also provided an important market for firms such as Redpath Offshore. Servicing the offshore industry has also provided a new role for the former Smiths Dock, Teesside's last shipyard, now the site of the Tees Offshore base for companies involved in sub-ocean technology.



Efficient blast on the landscape: British Steel's Redcar blast furnace reflects the northeast's traditional commitment to heavy industry

Steel records beaten but jobs toll is high

British Steel's priorities on Teesside are summed up by its performance there in recent years. In 1979, 15.82 man hours were spent producing each tonne of liquid steel. Now it is 3.7 hours. The drop indicates an increase in efficiency, partly the result of huge investment.

The company has spent £170 million on capital schemes on Teesside since 1985 (Chris Tighe writes).

The improved performance has, however, exacted a social price. The number of people employed by British Steel at its huge complex on the south bank of the Tees, at its nearby Skinningrove rolling mills, and at Hartlepool, has shrunk from 27,700 in 1970 to 6,000.

The days when Teesside, blessed with ready access to ironstone and coal, was the world's leading producer of iron have long gone. But British Steel is still the western world's largest producer of structural steel sections, most of which are made on Teesside.

In the first quarter of 1991, British Steel exports of structural steel sections to the European Community topped 90,000 tonnes, an all-time record.

Steel sections are exported to dozens of countries worldwide — a valuable hedge against the recession, which has led to a downturn in

Huge investment and streamlined efficiency by British Steel are opening up new opportunities

demand in the UK and United States.

Teesside is one of British Steel's five integrated steelworks sites. The others are at Ravenscraig in Scotland, Scunthorpe on Humberside, Port Talbot and Llanwern in Wales. Teesside and Scunthorpe are the main sites in British Steel's general steel division, which in the 1989/90 financial year contributed £1,900 million to the group's £5,100 million turnover.

Teesside alone produced 3.7 million tonnes of British Steel's total 14.4 million tonnes output.

In addition to structural sections, the vast Teesside complex, which includes the Redcar blast furnace, Europe's largest, makes semi-finished products for several other British Steel plants. Blooms — thick bars of steel — from Teesside are, for example, turned into rails at

Workington, Cumbria, and rolled at Skinningrove for use in the Soviet shipbuilding industry.

From August, Teesside will supply ingots and slabs to British Steel's Dazell plate mill in Leamington. This new market has opened up because of British Steel's rundown of its Ravenscraig complex — a rationalisation that has sparked fears of further restructuring within the group.

As part of its search for greater efficiency British Steel is involved in negotiations with its unions on Teesside about multi-skilling work arrangements. Already, many of the traditional divisions between crafts have been swept away, but the new proposals would go further.

"Team working is one of the things which has to be looked at for the future," says a British Steel spokesman.

A more unusual efficiency move by British Steel is its recent purchase, at an undisclosed price, of a second-hand large diameter pipe mill from Japan, where it had become surplus because of rationalisation. The mill is being shipped in sections to Hartlepool, where it will replace the 44th pipe mill, to satisfy in particular the needs of the North Sea offshore oil industry.

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Battle over boundaries

FOR anyone other than a knowledgeable resident, it can be difficult to tell where the boundary between one local authority ends and another begins in Cleveland (Peter Davenport writes).

Beneath the umbrella of the county council there are four district authorities in a tightly knit conurbation containing most of the population of about 500,000.

Supporters of the system say that it is necessary to safeguard local pride and traditions. Critics, however, claim the lack of a single identity for the area hinders progress.

Under the review begun by Michael Heseltine, the environment secretary, the structure of local government in the area is likely to change, possibly reverting closer to the situation before the 1974 shake-up that produced the county council and the district authorities of Middlesbrough, Hartlepool, Langbaurgh and Stockton-on-Tees.

Although there is widespread support for change, details and boundaries of any new authority are certain to be the subject of fierce debate.

Local government structure under the microscope

Some believe services within the existing county boundary should be provided by one authority, while others insist that changes should be based on the existing district councils.

In 1968, the 13 councils covering the area were amalgamated to produce the Teesside county borough. That single-tier authority lasted six years, when the new county of Cleveland was established.

Bruce Stephenson, chief executive of the county council, says his authority would be willing to support its own demise. "There is a general feeling that the two-tier system is not effective in urban areas. It is unlikely the county would argue for the maintenance of that system and, therefore, for its own survival in its present form," Mr Stephenson says. "There is a strong view developing that the sensible thing to do is to abolish all five authorities, the

county and the four boroughs, and start again."

Cleveland is unique because the area has a cluster of councils serving an urban area that is about 40 miles away from the next main population centre.

"There is so much dissatisfaction with the two-tier system here, both from the public and the professionals who work within it. The professionals find the system frustrating, inefficient and expensive. The public simply find it very confusing," Mr Stephenson says.

Mike Carr, the leader of Middlesbrough council, says that although everyone agrees a unitary system of local government would benefit the area, there is disagreement on what form it should take.

"Whatever the outcome, it is essential the system is given time to work. It should not be a quick fix, but something that will be in place in 50 or 100 years. Reorganisation should be based on existing district council boundaries. Teesside and Cleveland might be accurate geographical expressions, but they are not communities."

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way to win a race. We have been beaten five lengths and it could have been 10."

Darryll Holland, probably the

The Manchester-born teenager had not sat on a horse until three and a half years ago but joined Barry Mills after taking his 'O' levels.

Holland rode his first winner 12 months ago and yesterday's double completed a career half-century.

The three-day meeting at

Goodwood went well for the bookmakers with several well-backed favourites toppled. But while Barkerville was another market leader to be foiled in the Sussex Militia Maiden Stakes, Flashfoot's win proved costly. Backed from 7-1 to 7-2, Ian Balding's colt wore down the favourite in the final furlong to land a gamble for connections.

HIBALDS GUY CUNARD
CHAMPIONSHIP HUNTER CHASE
60: 3m 2f 160(yd) (10)
E HEAD 80 (C,D,G,S) A Bones 13-13-6
DY'S PARTNER 23 (B,F) S Pittingdng 9-13-6
NEVAL 364 Mls A Lockwood 13-12-7
COHAN 874 (F,G,S) J Jamieson 11-12-7

Y FRANKIE Mrs S Frank 7-12-7 M Tutty
H BANKS A Jackson 10-12-7 Miss T Jackson
CHEVALIER 588 (5) R Bawley 10-12-2
..... R Shields (5)
WHITE A LADY 58 C Holden 12-12-2 Mrs L Ward
GOFF 739 Miss M Wain 8-12-2 S Bristry
.....
1 Demi Cheval, 11-2 The Lady's Partner, 8-1
3-2 Ingleby Frankie.

BANK HOLIDAY NOVICE CHASE
 3) **IG FINISH 18 (D,S) W A Stephenson 7-11-5**
C Grant
MO 9 (C,F,G) Mrs S Bradburne 8-11-5
Mr J Bradburne
2-HL 18 J Jefferson 7-11-0 **B Dalton (7)**
THE STORM 13 R Johnson 8-11-0 **Mr P Johnson**
TEEVREE 30 Mrs B Austin 10-11-0 **D Wilkinson**
EDOU 13 Miss C Corrie 7-11-0 **A Starnford (7)**

TO 74 N Wagcott 10-11-0... Miss T Wagcott (7)
T CHERRY 18 D Lee 6-10-8... R Marley
M MAGIC 18 (3) J Swiers 6-10-8... Mr S Swiers
S-4 Some Mo, 5-2 Lingham Magic, 9-1 Distart
soul, 20-1 others.

BLACK NOVICES HURDLE

1 24 (C.D.F.S) G Moore 4-11-3... M Dwyer
W.N.W.S. S.F. 03 11-11-3 11-11-3 C.D.F.S.

W WESPER 6 J Joy Defeat Simon P J Conner
 JUSTICE 24 B Ellison 10-11-2 B Ellison (?)
 HP 6 M Barnes 5-11-2 P A Fernald
 20 R Barr 5-11-2 A Heywood (?)
 R AMBLE W A Stephenson 5-11-2 A Merrigan
 TOUCH 73 (B) R Swiers 5-11-2 M S Swiers
 G SILVER 13 R Johnson 5-11-2 Mr P Johnson
 PRICES 6 W Smith 6-10-11 N Bentley (?)
 BLUES 25F (B) Mrs S Austin 4-10-11 D Wilkinson
 MADAM R Woodhouse 7-10-11 R Marley
 G KATIE 290F J Haynes 5-10-11 D J Moffatt (?)
 G VIEWS 16 W A Stephenson 4-10-11 Mr K Johnson

JURSE SPECIALISTS

**WIMBOROUGH DIOCESE 450th
NOVICES HURDLE (£1,895: 2m)**

60N LAD 13 C Chesapeake 6-10-12 M Jennings (7)
 60N LAD 10 (G) D Williams 7-10-12 B Powell
 60B DAY 10 M Mel McKie 5-10-12 J Duggan
 60A 13F R Alkhus 5-10-12 R Dugmore
 60A PARK 10 (J) D Johnson 5-10-7 S J O'Neill
 60N AND KISS 127 (D) C Cypr 5-10-7 T Grantham
 60S 10 (2) P Jones 8-10-7 Heather Murchard (?)
 60F J Wharton 4-10-7
 60F JUFF 25F R Jackson 4-10-7 A Jackson (9)
 60T 18 J O'Donoghue 4-10-2 M Kinsie
 60L LADY 11F M Murgie 4-10-2 W Irvine
 60S 11-2 Don Jacobo, 6-1 Angelica Park,

DEACON SPONNE HANDICAP
3m 190yd) (9)

LAVE 43 (C,D,B,F,G,S) N Henderson 10-11-10
 R Dumawoody
 ER 17 (D,F,G) Jimmy Fitzgerald 11-11-9
 D Byrne
 OD 20 (D,F,S) R Curtis 11-11-0
 D Morris
 OLVER 18 (B,D,F,G,S) R Dickinson 13-10-13
 Martin Jones (3)
 Y HENRY 18 (B,D,S) J Fox 11-10-13, S Fox (7)
 N POINT 9 (B,F,G,S) P Dutton 9-10-13
 J O'Hanlon (7)
 BEAR 8 (D,F,S) William Price 9-10-12 (7ex)
 P Bernard (3)
 RN 16 (F,G,S) Mrs A Hewitt 12-10-12
 P S J O'Neill

AD 15 (D,F) R O'Sullivan 6-11-10 R Durwoody
 S 25 (C,D,F) D Murney Smith 7-11-5 P Verling (S)
 C AFFAIR 10 (C,D,F,G,S) D Wilson 10-11-1
 C Llewellyn

SPECIAL 98 (B,F) M Pipe 7-11-0
REZ 27 (D,S) O Brennan 7-10-13 M Brennezt
APER 9 (D,F,G,S) R O'Sullivan 9-10-12
D O'Sullivan (S)
LIN LION 16 (G) R Thompson 8-10-12 A Webb
LLS 15 (C,D,F) M Banks 5-10-12 D Skyrme
FUN 14 (V,D,F) Mrs A King 6-10-6 S Earle
MEMORY 14 (D,F) R Frost 5-10-4 J Frost
AL ABBEY 22 (B,D,F) R Alkhusht 5-10-0
L Harvey
AL IRISH 83F (D,F) D Gandolfo 6-10-0 B Powell
ave Falls, 9-2 Aronst. 5-1 Always Special,
Leasing Memory, 12-1 others.

TO MEETINGS

6 ran. 31. 51. G Wrang. Tot: £8.30. £2.30.
£1.20. DF: £4.40. CSF: £10.85.

4.30 (5) 1. Bellesecret (D Meredith, 11-4); 2.
Sweetings Pearl (16-1); 3. Snowgr (8-4 fav);
4. Bran. Sh. Hd. Vt. P. Diddin. Tot: £4.80; £2.00;
£4.90. £1.10. DF: £52.90. CSF: £35.75;
Tricast: £92.19. After a stewards' enquiry;

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PORTUGAL	187	207	307
IRISH	-	149	-
GREYHOUNDS	172	222	-

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191	291	391
192	292	392
193	293	393
194	294	394
172	272	-

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Fowler's fall enhances hopes of win for Surrey

By JOHN WOODCOCK

THE OVAL: Lancashire, with eight second-innings wickets in hand, are 92 runs behind Surrey

LANCASHIRE'S chances of winning this match were virtually eliminated yesterday when Surrey took a first innings lead of 107. As for a Surrey victory, that became a lot more likely in the last four overs when first Fowler and then Austin, sent in as a rather superior nightwatchman, were caught at slip.

As on the first day the best cricket had been played before lunch. There was a time after tea when it seemed to have slipped Surrey's mind that it is not a four-day match. But those two late wickets made up for that, and the ball is turning — six of Surrey wickets fell to spin — and the pitch still has something to offer the faster bowlers.

It is certainly a much better match than the one which the two sides had here last year when Surrey declared at 707 for nine and Lancashire replied with 863.

Until Stewart was caught at second slip yesterday morning, 80 minutes after the start, Surrey showed mid-summer form with the bat. With some fine cover drives Alikhan, head over the ball, belied his reputation as a stone-waller, while Stewart played as he used to in the days before he had a Test career to worry about.

Their eye for the short single also had much to do with 67 runs coming in the first hour.

Then Stewart, pushing forward at Watkinson, was

caught at second slip. The ball before he had swung over the short boundary on the Harleford Road side. After Stewart was gone, Ward kept Surrey's innings moving, helped briefly by Greig, but it is one of those pitches with just enough in it to keep the balance between bat and ball.

After lunch Wasim Akram at one end and Yates, with off breaks from the other, found bowling well worthwhile.

Yates, in fact, was kept at it all the afternoon. Although there was no excuse for his six no-balls, and his line led to his having five, sometimes six, men on the leg side, he still made a good impression.

There is obviously plenty of cricket there.

By tea Wasim Akram had gone off, not imagining that he was playing for Pakistan, but with a bruised toe. He had earlier had Greig caught at the wicket. Ward had been caught at silly point off bat and pad, and Feltham bowled, both looking to attack Yates but left short of the pitch of the ball.

Medleycott, though, made sure that Surrey got their full batting points, playing very respectably, his confidence boosted no doubt by a hundred at Fenner's last Monday.

With Allott also out of action, with a strained stomach, it took Watkinson, switching to off breaks, to get rid of Medleycott, caught at cover point off a well-hit drive.

After that Surrey were much better off bowling or swinging their bats, a fact which took a surprisingly long time to dawn on them.

Cowdrey to the rescue for Kent

By JACK BAILEY

TRENT BRIDGE: Nottinghamshire, with nine second-innings wickets in hand, are 62 runs ahead of Kent

GRAHAM Cowdrey came to Kent's rescue yesterday after he had appeared to be disappearing quickly from view. His first century of the season arrived at a particularly opportune time. For what with a groin injury to Hinks causing a prolonged absence after his progress to 38 had become increasingly painful, and then Robinson's belated trust in the spin of Hemmings and Allott beginning to pay off, it seemed certain that Notts would be poised to leave them a formidable fourth innings task.

As it was, Cowdrey's undefeated 109 and a little help from his friends, enabled Benson to declare only 45 runs behind and leave Notts with half-an-hour to negotiate. From the second ball, Broad's slash at Merrick (it had been all too easy for Broad in the first innings) resulted in a catch to Marsh and Kent, despite growing absenteeism and a sizeable injury list, are not yet done.

All but Cowdrey and Fleming, in a breezy little knock, found the way weary and the going hard. Taylor has been out of sorts this season; and once Penn and Hinks had been separated — almost before anyone could make a joke about the juxtaposition of the two names — it began to show. But Taylor's unorthodox method survives on grit and there was plenty of that on display as he and Hinks nudged Kent along to 97 for two at lunch and Taylor for 20 more overs after Hinks had failed to resurface.

Nor did Cowdrey find the going easy to begin with. He shifted up a gear once Taylor had been caught at short extra after a stay of three hours. The advent of Fleming had much to do with it; so, perhaps, did the denial of a bat-out-of-boot catch from Cowdrey off Hemmings when he had made 45 and all Notts went up. Fleming put the Notts attack under real duress for the first time in his 40 from 48 balls and Cowdrey went with him. His three-and-a-half-hour innings included two pulled sixes and 15 fours.



Hundred at home: Mike Gatting put hamstring trouble behind him with a century

Essex go slow after lunch

By IVO TENNANT

CHELMSFORD (second day of three): Warwickshire, with nine second-innings wickets in hand, are 52 runs behind Essex

AFTER much positive cricket on the first day, and indeed in the first session yesterday, Essex for reasons of their own became tardy in the extreme. The pitch was true, the weather ideal, their approach curious. Given an opportunity to build a healthy lead in the afternoon, they did not take it.

This approach was all the more unexpected since Hussain had taken the attack to Warwickshire's bowlers with some ferocity. His half century, which contained several cracking drives, came to an end in the last over before lunch. So, too, did the entertainment.

Between lunch and tea, when

Essex should have been in the ascendancy, they managed 99 runs. This cost them a final batting point and conceivably also the match. What was more, Donald in this period, was given but two overs.

In his first six-over spell, at the start of the day, the openers' ambitions had, understandably, not extended beyond keeping him out. Free of niggling injuries, Donald is reckoned now to be bowling quicker than ever. The wicketkeeper was standing far short of halfway back to the boundary.

Hussain's pace was too much for Shahid, who was trying to turn him to leg, and Pritchard, fishing outside off stump.

The change bowlers were a different proposition. Salim Malik made 21 in no time at all before dollyng up a catch to

Manton, the bowler, and Hussain drew on this example. He and Stephenson added 77 in 23 overs. For as long as Hussain was hammering anything overpitched through mid-wicket or over the in-field, his partner's fall was exemplary.

Alas for Essex, Reeve slipped one through Hussain's forward defence in the last over before lunch. His half century of 76 balls, including eight fours, was an affirmation of his talent.

It was different thereafter. Lewis, century maker in his one previous championship innings, now spent 20 minutes getting off the mark. Stephenson, having grafted commendably, found he could not raise his game.

When Manton eventually had him caught at the wicket, an innings of 79 had lasted 262 minutes.

Middlesex pair punish bowlers

By RICHARD STREETON

HOVE (second day of three): Sussex, with all second-innings wickets in hand, are 90 runs ahead of Middlesex

BOWLING on this square has become the cricket equivalent of a sentence in the salt mines. By the time Middlesex declared yesterday, Ian Hutchinson and Gatting having made hundreds, only seven wickets had fallen.

Gatting declared, 40 runs behind, as soon as Middlesex secured maximum batting points, and it will be interesting to see what sort of a target Sussex leave them today.

A back injury prevented Smith from opening when Stas

left, and Hall and Lenham continued the bat's dominance. Gatting and Hutchinson added 175 in 42 overs and took maximum advantage against a Sussex attack which tended to pitch too short. A flawless pitch always made it heartbreaking work, however. Pigott was the steadiest and gained the late consolation of Brown's wicket.

The second-wicket pair came together after Roseberry, who was never in proper touch, lifted a catch to deep square leg. At one stage, play was threatened by bad light but nothing disturbed Hutchinson's composure.

Hutchinson, aged 26, is a relatively late developer, but

would have established a regular place by now if he played for a weaker county. He made three fleeting appearances in 1988 before scoring three hundreds in ten matches in 1989. Last season, when Middlesex fielded an unchanged first five, his summer was disrupted by injuries. Hutchinson obtained most of his 22 fours with stylish off drives. He was leg-before to Bunting, trying to turn a ball to the leg side.

Gatting opened with 11 forceful fours in his first fifty and 40 minutes he never shirked sharp singles, to confirm that last weekend's hamstring problem was behind him.

POINT-TO-POINT

Mr Sponge favoured by demanding track

By BRIAN BEE

MR SPONGE may have the edge in a competitive race for the fifth running of The Times Point-to-point Championship this afternoon.

When second at Kingston Blount in late April, Jonathan Trice-Rolph's mount finished seven lengths in front of Denstone Wanderer, who went on to win a week later at Folkestone and in the process incur a 4lb penalty. Mr Sponge then won his next two races, including one at Ashorne, an undulating right-handed track with an uphill finish, similar to Towcester's testing run in.

Warleggan's win at Worcester on Wednesday, his second in four days, highlights the chance of In Hand. Running for the first time over regulation fences, at Bangor, In Hand was headed at the last by Warleggan, but ran on to take second and had some useful horses behind.

Previously, however, In Hand was third at Eaton Hall, well beaten by the winner, Sandstone Arch, who pulled up in the Bangor race after looking the probable winner three fences out.

In a point-to-point Sandstone Arch would be expected to beat

THE TIMES Point-to-point Championship



In Hand and most of the others here. But he has shown a liking for hunter chasing, failing to finish in three attempts.

Last time out at Llantarnam, Gummel Boy produced a strong run to be beaten only a short head by Willy Wagtail. Admittedly he was in receipt of 7lb but on his next appearance Willy Wagtail easily won a hunter chase at Warwick by 12 lengths.

When first in a three-runner contest against modest opposition at Milborne St Andrew last time, Strong Bond proved only that he could act on firm going. Previously he had followed up his Kingston Blount win in the qualifier with a creditable

third at Badbury Rings. On his Alphenham run in mid-April, Skywardbound was well held by In Hand and though second in his next two outings the form does not look good enough to suggest success here. Similarly, Linger At Sea, the representative from the south east, will need to show a significant improvement to the seconds he has achieved on his last two outings in minor events. The only mare in the race, Goodbye Roscoe, is also the youngest and, though steadily making progress, she seems unlikely to make much of an impact against the opposition here.

With no more than about 6lb separating the top half-dozen runners, and most being inexperienced over the stiffer fences, it would be unwise to support any horse at odds of less than 4-1. My three against the field are Mr Sponge, In Hand and Gummel Boy and they are preferred in that order.

At Sedgefield today the Archibalds Gray Cup and Northern Point-to-point Championship will also be decided. Glen Lochan is selected to win from Bronze Head.

CHAMPIONSHIP FINAL LINE-UP

3.45 TIMES CHAMPIONSHIP HUNTER CHASE (Final: amateurs: £1,843; 3m 190yd) (9 runners)

1	334311 DENSTONE WANDERER 10 (P) (Miss P Sutton) Miss P Sutton 9-12-0	C Coyne (7)	95
2	2311212 GUNMETAL BOY 13 (D Williams) D Williams 7-12-0	T Rooney (7)	96
3	2221132 IN HAND 6 (Mrs J Webster) Mrs J Webster 11-12-0	A Griffith (7)	98
4	41-12122 LINGER AT SEA 18 (Mrs N Hacking) Mrs N Hacking 9-12-0	P Hacking (3)	93
5	12-32111 MR SPONGE 13 (B Topple) B Topple 10-12-0	J Trice-Rolph (7)	97
6	12-32111 MR SPONGE 13 (B Topple) B Topple 10-12-0	J Trice-Rolph (7)	97
7	12-32111 MR SPONGE 13 (B Topple) B Topple 10-12-0	J Trice-Rolph (7)	97
8	12-32111 MR SPONGE 13 (B Topple) B Topple 10-12-0	J Trice-Rolph (7)	97
9	12-32111 MR SPONGE 13 (B Topple) B Topple 10-12-0	J Trice-Rolph (7)	97

Line under form figure denotes hunter chase; remainder is point-to-point form
BETTING: 4-1 Sandstone Arch, 9-2 In Hand, 5-1 Mr Sponge, 13-2 Gun Metal Boy, Strong Bond, 8-1 Denstone Wanderer, 14-1 Skywardbound, Linger At Sea, 25-1 Goodbye Roscoe.
1990: EASTERN CHANT 8-11-7 C Stockton (7-4 fav) Miss I Dady 10 ran

Form guide to the nine contenders

DENSTONE WANDERER	LINGER AT SEA	SKYWARDBOUND
May 14, Folkestone, firm: led from 8th to best Ocean Boy 4 (2m 4f, 7 ran). May 6, Tweseldown, good: Made all to beat Arctic Fox 1 (2m 4f, 7 ran). April 27, Kingston Blount, firm: weakly approaching last when beaten 5f and 7f by Wild Blusion and Mr Sponge.	May 8, Aldington, good: No extra run in when 3rd to Fifty Bucks (gave 3m) (3m, 5 ran). April 20, Hestfield, good: Ran on gamely 2nd to Speedy Boy (gave 8m) (3m, 5 ran). April 1, Aldington, good to firm: Left clear two out when beating Rusty Rattle 15f (3m, 7 ran).	May 11, Ashdown, firm: no extra run in when 3rd to Fifty Bucks (gave 3m) (3m, 5 ran). May 4, Gidham, good to firm: ran on when 3rd to Happy Higgins (3m, 13 ran). April 13, Alphenham, good to firm: stayed on when 3rd to In Hand (3m, 10 ran).
GUNMETAL BOY	MR SPONGE	STRONG BOND
May 11, Llantarnam, good to firm: strong run on the flat when beaten short head by Willy Wagtail (gave 7f) (3m, 5 ran). April 27, St Mary Hill, good: just held when beaten 1/2 by Radio Cue (falter disqualified) (3m, 14 ran). April 13, Alphenham, good to firm: fell in race won by Charnel Fennell (3m, 17 ran).	May 11, Kingston Blount, firm: Left clear two out when beating Light Song 12f (3m, 5 ran). May 6, Ashdown, good: Ran on well when beating Red Furong 8f (3m, 11 ran). April 27, Kingston Blount, firm: Stayed on well when 5th to Wild Blusion, with Denstone Wanderer 7f 3rd (3m, 9 ran).	May 12, Milborne St Andrew, firm: drew clear to beat Right Card 20f (3m, 3 ran). April 13, Badbury Rings, good to firm: no extra on run-in when 3rd to Cornelia by 5f (3m, 8 ran). April 6, King Western, good: ran on well when beating Stans Joy by 3f (3m, 11 ran).
IN HAND	SANDSTONE ARCH	GOODBYE ROSCOE
May 18, Bangor, good to firm: headed last when 4th to Warleggan (3m 14 ran). April 27, Eaton Hall, firm: No extra from three out when 10f 3rd to Sandstone Arch (3m, 6 ran). April 13, Alphenham, good to firm: stayed on when 5th to Red Furong 8f (3m, 11 ran). The Wrekin by 3f, with Skywardbound 6f away 3rd (3m, 10 ran).	May 18, Bangor, good to firm: Led last weakened quickly and pulled up two out in race won by Warleggan (3m, 14 ran). May 6, Elyon-on-Severn, good: Ran on well when beating Tyndering 16f (3m, 7 ran). April 27, Eaton Hall, firm: ran on well when beating Tronaton 3f (3m, 8 ran).	May 11, Llantarnam, good to firm: unseated rider at the second in race won by Denstone Wanderer (3m, 14 ran). April 27, St Mary Hill, good: ran on well when beating Clover Express 11f (3m, 10 ran). April 13, St Mary Hill, good to firm: some late progress when distance 3rd to Harwell Queen (3m, 12 ran).

Pupil aiming to be master

By CHRISTOPHER GOULDING

MR SPONGE, one of the nine contenders for The Times Championship final at Towcester today, was purchased as a schoolmaster but quickly adopted the attitude of a wayward pupil rather than that of a sedate tutor.

"Barry Topple, his owner, bought Mr Sponge for his son, Christopher, to ride. But he did not turn out to be suitable," Jonathan Trice-Rolph, who trains and will ride the wily little grey today, said.

There is nothing nasty about the horse. But he can take rather a strong hold, especially for a novice rider.

Clearly, Trice-Rolph has found where the controls are since the impetuous 10-year-old gelding joined his liveryard in the Cotswolds, where the silence is interrupted only by the bleating of a spring lamb.

Trice-Rolph, formerly with the King's Troop, cut his teeth on the hard way in point-to-point. After five years' race riding and 17 seconds his persistence was rewarded.

"My lucky break came with Sib when he won a 20-runner race," Trice-Rolph said. "His owner, Terry Greathead, had a

good bet at 33-1. There was some party afterwards."

Now the farmer's son is regarded as the best amateur rider on the south Midlands circuit. Further success has been gained at Cheltenham and Sandown.

"Point-to-pointing is a tremendous sport without too many rules. You can turn up with your horse and if the conditions are right you run, if not it does not matter. The sport is at a high standard now that it is so expensive to have a horse professionally trained."

"Mr Sponge was Barry's first venture into point-to-pointing," Trice-Rolph, aged 33, continued. "Last year, in his first season for Barry, 45 won one and was placed on his other two outings. Now he has won three races and finished in the frame in all his seven races."

"After we finished second at Kingston Blount last month, where he qualified for The Times race, it was decided to go for the final," his jockey went on. "My main concern at Towcester will be the fences. Mr Sponge can be a bit too much of a hurry and get in rather close. I hope to drop him out off the pace and then see what we can do."

Like his namesake, Mr Sponge, the character immortalised by the writer R S Surtees as the man whose principal interests were fox and fortune hunting, the little dapple grey can, with luck, claim his own slice of prosperity.

Trice-Rolph: rides Mr Sponge in Times final

Britannic Assurance county championships

Surrey v Lancs
THE OVAL: Lancashire, with eight second-innings wickets in hand, are 92 runs behind Surrey

LANCASHIRE: First Innings 254 (G Fowler 113, M Watkinson 55, Wasim Younis 5 for 37) Second Innings: G Fowler 5, M Watkinson 5, Wasim Younis 5 for 37. Surrey: First Innings 113, M Watkinson 55, Wasim Younis 5 for 37. Second Innings: G Fowler 5, M Watkinson 5, Wasim Younis 5 for 37.

Essex v Warwick
CHELMSFORD: Warwickshire, with nine second-innings wickets in hand, are 52 runs behind Essex
WARWICKSHIRE: First Innings 227 (D P Carter 104, A P Foster 5 for 80) Second Innings: A P Foster 7, D P Carter 5 for 80. Essex: First Innings 175, D P Carter 104, A P Foster 5 for 80. Second Innings: A P Foster 7, D P Carter 5 for 80.

Surrey's First Innings
D J Blainey 7, A J Blainey 7, A J Blainey 7, A J Blainey 7, A J Blainey 7, A J Blainey 7, A J Blainey 7, A J Blainey 7, A J Blainey 7, A J Blainey 7.

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Yorks v Gloucs

SHEFFIELD: Gloucestershire, with seven first-innings wickets in hand, are 176 runs ahead of Yorkshire

YORKSHIRE: First Innings 105 (M D Mason 5, W Higgs 5 for 55) Second Innings: M D Mason 5, W Higgs 5 for 55. Gloucestershire: First Innings 281, M D Mason 5, W Higgs 5 for 55. Second Innings: M D Mason 5, W Higgs 5 for 55.

Essex's First Innings
J P Stephenson 79, N Sheel 11, J P Stephenson 79, N Sheel 11, J P Stephenson 79, N Sheel 11, J P Stephenson 79, N Sheel 11, J P Stephenson 79, N Sheel 11, J P Stephenson 79, N Sheel 11.

Sussex v Middlesex
HOVE: Sussex, with all second-innings wickets in hand, are 90 runs ahead of Middlesex
MIDDLESEX: First Innings 245 (A P Wells 137, D M Smith 128) Second Innings: A P Wells 137, D M Smith 128. Sussex: First Innings 245, A P Wells 137, D M Smith 128. Second Innings: A P Wells 137, D M Smith 128.

Derbys v Somerset
DERBY: Derbyshire, with eight second-innings wickets in hand, are 24 runs behind Somerset
SOMERSET: First Innings 375 for 7 (D J Herd 135, A N Hayhurst 118) Second Innings: D J Herd 135, A N Hayhurst 118. Derbyshire: First Innings 375, D J Herd 135, A N Hayhurst 118. Second Innings: D J Herd 135, A N Hayhurst 118.

Gloucestershire's First Innings
J P Stephenson 79, N Sheel 11, J P Stephenson 79, N Sheel 11, J P Stephenson 79, N Sheel 11, J P Stephenson 79, N Sheel 11, J P Stephenson 79, N Sheel 11.

Derbys's First Innings
J P Stephenson 79, N Sheel 11, J P Stephenson 79, N Sheel 11, J P Stephenson 79, N Sheel 11, J P Stephenson 79, N Sheel 11, J P Stephenson 79, N Sheel 11.

Gloucestershire's Second Innings
J P Stephenson 79, N Sheel 11, J P Stephenson 79, N Sheel 11, J P Stephenson 79, N Sheel 11, J P Stephenson 79, N Sheel 11, J P Stephenson 79, N Sheel 11.

Gloucestershire's First Innings

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● RACING 37, 38
● CRICKET 38
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England well placed to beat West Indies as the first match of the Texaco Trophy is carried over

A glorious return by Botham

By ALAN LEE, CRICKET CORRESPONDENT

EDGBASTON (England won toss): England with six wickets in hand, need 76 runs from 28 overs to beat West Indies

DEVOTEES of the Ian Botham soap opera had no need to attend yesterday: they knew the script in advance. No sooner had the irrepressible Botham begun his latest England comeback than the opposition fell at his feet, as if fearful of spoiling the happy ending everyone craved.

If, this time, the bounds of credibility were stretched further than usual it was because Botham, at 35, is a cunning pussycat of a bowler rather than the roaring lion of old, and because the opposition was the most powerful team in the world, against whom he has never previously done justice to his inimitable talent.

In his present mood of resurgence, however, nothing seems beyond him. So, in his 99th one-day international, Botham not only improved his best bowling analysis but was in residence with the bat, in grim light, when this first Texaco Trophy game was adjourned to today.

England remain just about on course to win, although the delicate state of the match was illustrated by the fact that neither side seemed sorry to call it a day when bad light intervened for the fourth time. If the 18,000 capacity crowd were denied a finish, few will have gone home feeling cheated. Instead, their talk will once again have been dominated by the man who, ten seasons ago on this very ground, settled a Test against Australia by taking five wickets for one run.

By comparison, yesterday's efforts might be thought mundane and yet, coming from Botham in his first international appearance for two years, they were anything but. His 11-over quota, bowled straight through, brought the wickets of Richardson, Greenidge, Logie and Hooper, four of the West Indies' top six. He also had two catches missed off his bowling, the survivors being Richards and Logie.

West Indies were consequently falling fast at 121 for eight in the 45th over before an unbroken ninth-wicket stand of 52, between Ambrose and Walsh, complicated England's task.

We should know by lunch-time today whether that partnership was enough to turn the game, but on this pitch it just might have done. Andy Atkinson, recruited in the winter by Warwickshire from Essex as their new head groundsman, will not be especially proud of his first international offering. Even allowing for the constant swing permitted by heavy cloud, the ball moved sideways too much and too often for this form of cricket: the pace, too, was inconsistent. Gooch may well have favoured fielding first anyway but, in such conditions, he had little choice. It was a very good toss to have won and England did not waste their fortune.

Haynes had not recovered from his back trouble in time to open for the West Indies and neither of the new partners, Greenidge and Simmons, was ever at ease. DeFreitas was miserly and Lewis, bowling sharply, might have had Simmons lbw before he mistimed a drive to cover. Botham was summoned, to matadorial cheers, for the 13th over. His first ball might have been delivered in a village charity match. Botham frowned and stretched stiffly. His second was of good length and Richardson, eyes ablaze, drove it head-high to Illingworth at cover. You never lose the knack, as Botham's expression told us all.

Greenidge nibbled fatally at a wideish, rising ball in Botham's fifth over and at 48 for three the West Indies required one of Logie's calming innings. He responded by shovelling his first ball for six over square-leg and carving his second to cover where Lewis put it down.

Richards was missed at slip by an over-casual Atherton but there was little profit to come. Logie repeated his first-ball shot and this time chipped into DeFreitas's hands and Richards, hitting across Gooch, was caught at mid-on off a leading edge.

Before lunch, Hooper and Logie were gone, too, the former to a beauty from Botham, whose third comeback was now painted in the glory of his first, in 1986, rather than the sourness of his second, three years later. Sixteen runs from Lewis's last over gave England something to do. Gooch's leg-before dismissal to Ambrose's first legitimate ball gave them a lot more.

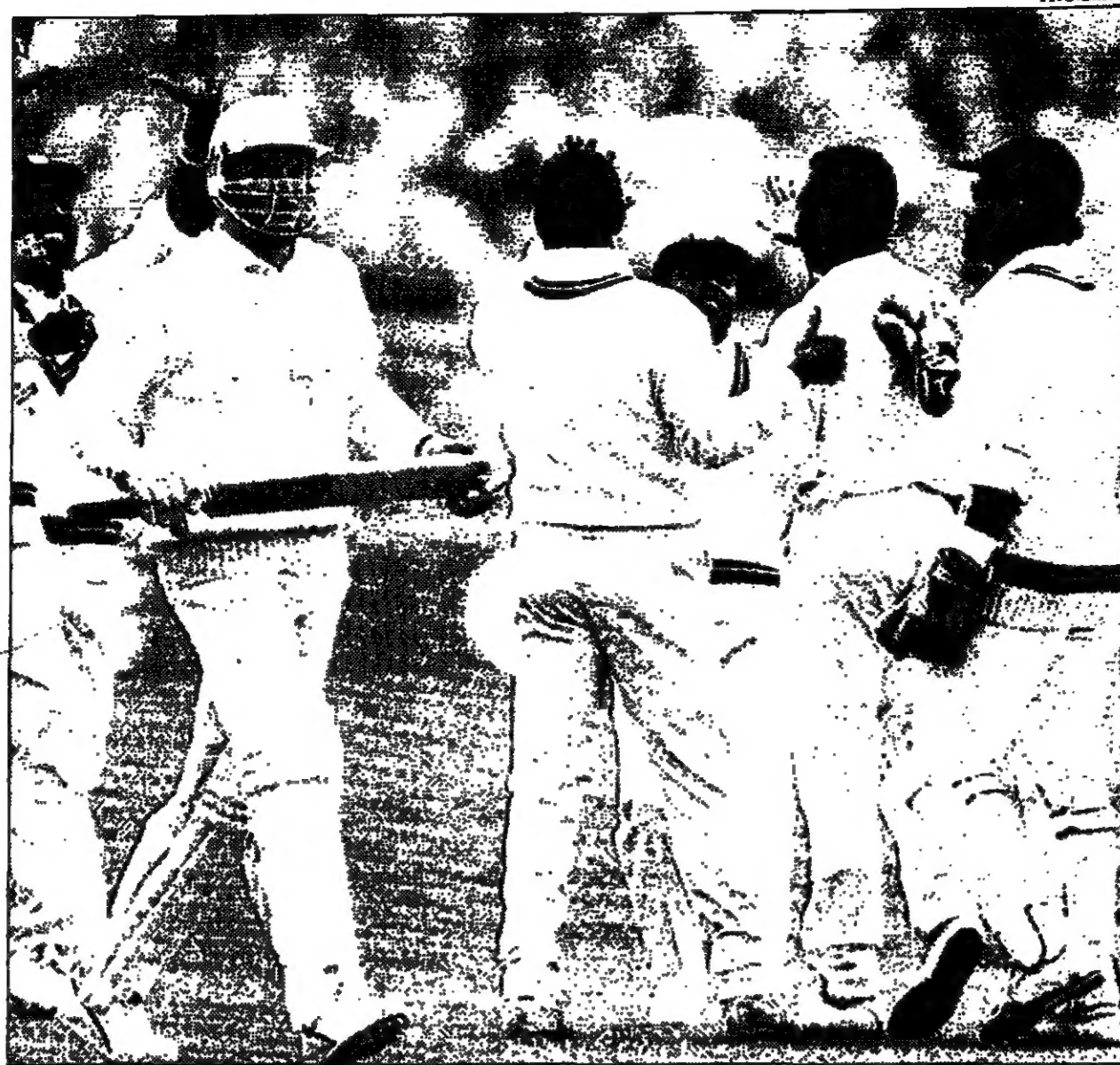
Hick and Atherton stayed wicketfully together for 15 overs before the debutant, was undone by a classic piece of bowling by Marshall. Lamb and Fairbrother fell to Hooper and Atherton's proven ability to bat through an innings has seldom been more urgently required. Unless, of course, his partner takes it into his head to finish the job in style.

England won toss

WEST INDIES

England

Time to celebrate: West Indies fielders show their delight at the dismissal of Hick for 14 on his England debut



Time to celebrate: West Indies fielders show their delight at the dismissal of Hick for 14 on his England debut

EDGBASTON SCOREBOARD									
WEST INDIES					ENGLAND				
	Bats	Runs	Wickets	Extras		Bats	Runs	Wickets	Extras
C G Greenidge c Russell b Botham	23	48	3	75	G A Gooch lbw b Ambrose	0	0	2	2
P V Simmons c Gooch b Lewis	4	1	25	56	Baton by late drawing	36	1	125	84
M A Richardson c Illingworth b Botham	3	0	20	21	M A Atherton not out	14	1	66	48
A L Logie c Lewis b Botham	30	4	62	45	G A Hick c Richardson b Marshall	18	2	38	26
T V A Richards c Fairbrother b Gooch	18	1	26	29	A J Lamb b Hooper	4	0	5	6
C L Hooper c Russell b Botham	10	2	14	11	N H Fairbrother c Duggan b Hooper	1	0	7	2
D J Gooch c Lewis b Botham	5	0	21	18	Cutting off break too close to his body	26	0	0	0
M D Marshall c Lewis b DeFreitas	17	1	41	42	Extras (lb 7 w 8 nb 11)	26	0	0	0
C E L Ambrose not out	21	0	75	59	Total (4 wickets, 27 overs, 125 min)	98	0	0	0
C A Walsh not out	29	1	3	43	P A J DeFreitas, C G Lewis, H C Russell, D R Pringle and R K Kingworth to bat	36	1	125	84
Extras (lb 1, lb 5, w 8, nb 1)	19	0	0	0	FALL OF WICKETS: 1-1 (Atherton 0 not out, 2-41 (Atherton 18) 3-60 (Atherton 27), 4-87 (Atherton 29)	14	1	66	48
Total (8 wickets, 55 overs, 209 min)	173	0	0	0	BOWLING: Ambrose 6-1-18-1 (w 2, nb 8) (5-1-14-1, 1-0-4-0); DeFreitas 5-1-17-0 (w 4) (one spell); Marshall 6-0-17-1 (nb 8) (one spell); Walsh 6-0-20-0 (nb 1) (one spell); Simmons 2-0-7-0 (w 1, nb 1) (one spell); Hooper 2-0-12-2 (w 1) (one spell)	18	2	38	26
FALL OF WICKETS: 1-8 (Greenidge 3 not out, 2-16 (Greenidge 7), 3-55 (Richards 1), 4-78 (Richards 25), 5-94 (Hooper 1), 6-98 (Duggan 5), 7-103 (Marshall 4), 8-121 (Ambrose 5)	0	0	0	0	INTERMEDIATE SCORES: 10 overs: 31-1; 22: 82-2	4	0	5	6
BOWLING: DeFreitas 11-3-22-1 (w 1) (5-3-4-0-15-1, 1-0-3-0); Lewis 11-3-41-1 (w 2) (5-2-4-1, 4-1-11-0, 2-0-21-0); Pringle 7-0-22-0 (w 1, nb 1) (one spell); Botham 11-2-45-4 (one spell); Gooch 5-0-17-1 (4-0-15-1, 1-0-1-0); Kingworth 10-1-20-1 (w 2) (one spell)	0	0	0	0	Umpires: J H Hampshire and M J Kitchen	1	0	7	2
INTERMEDIATE SCORES: 10 overs: 13-1; 20: 44-2; 30: 84-5; 40: 108-7; 50: 148-8	0	0	0	0		0	0	0	0

PAUL, Downton, the Middlesex and England wicketkeeper, who has struggled with impaired vision since a cricketing accident last summer, announced his retirement from the first-class game last night. The current championship match at Hove against Sussex will be his final game.

Downton, who played 30 Test matches for England, was struck in the left eye by a ball while keeping wicket in a Sunday game against Hampshire at Basingstoke last June. After lengthy treatment and rest he returned to the game later in the season but was always handicapped. A specialist has confirmed, however, that the damage to Downton's eye is permanent.

Three lifters are suspended

By JOHN GOODBODY

Gymnasium in Slough, one of whose owners is Steve Pinnent — a former Commonwealth Games weightlifting champion who was jailed for three months in November 1989 for selling anabolic steroids.

Dorigo moves north to aid Leeds's future

By IAN ROSS

LEEDS United yesterday further underlined their determination to launch a sustained challenge for the League championship next season when they completed the signing of Tony Dorigo, Chelsea's England international full back.

Dorigo, who is valued at around £1.3 million, signed a four-year contract with the Yorkshire club after agreeing personal terms with Howard Wilkinson, the Leeds manager.

Although the clubs have yet to agree on the size of a fee, Wilkinson said that he was hopeful the matter could be resolved amicably, without having to resort to an independent tribunal.

Yesterday's deal took Wilkinson's spending to in excess of £2.5 million in less than 48 hours following the signings, on Tuesday, of Rodney and Raymond Wallace from Southampton.

Dorigo, who refused the offer of a new contract at Stamford Bridge, becomes the fourth Leeds player to have cost more than £1 million since Wilkinson succeeded Billy Bremner as team manager two-and-a-half years ago.

"I do not have a bottomless pit of money available to me; there are restrictions," Wilkinson said. He has spent more than £10 million in an attempt to restore Leeds to a

position of prominence within English football.

Dorigo, who had been linked with several leading clubs, including Liverpool and Rangers, over the past few months, said that his decision to move north was partly fuelled by his ambition to establish himself in the England international side.

"I have come to a tremendous club which has already proved itself to be ambitious. The Australian-born left back said: "They want the first division championship next season, and so do I. I do believe that this move can help me put the pressure on Stuart Pearce for the England No. 3 shirt."

"It will be a very difficult job to shift him but I am confident about my own abilities."

"I rejected the chance to stay at Chelsea for a variety of reasons which I do not want to go into. Let's just say that I had four, up and down, years at Stamford Bridge," he added.

Wilkinson said: "Tony will improve the quality within our squad and enhance our chances of getting results in the first division next season."

After completing a statutory medical examination, Dorigo immediately left for London to join the England squad for the game against Argentina at Wembley tomorrow.

Lazio confident of Gascoigne option

By OUR SPORTS STAFF

OFFICIALS of Lazio, the Italian club, hope to finalise an option today to sign Paul Gascoigne when he has recovered from the knee operation that will keep him out of football until next year.

After further talks in London yesterday with Nat Solomon, the chairman of Tottenham Hotspur plc, Carlo Regalia, the Lazio general manager, said: "We hope to finalise agreement because of the goodwill on three sides, ourselves, Paul Gascoigne and Nat Solomon."

Lazio will make a down payment on a transfer fee. Gascoigne, who will be 24 on Monday, is in hospital after being carried off in the FA Cup Final against Nottingham Forest at Wembley with a ruptured cruciate ligament. This forced the postponement of an £8.5 million transfer to the Rome club.

There were reports last night that a new player had emerged in the protracted game for Tottenham's future. An overseas buyer is believed to be awaiting the outcome of the attempts by the club to avoid being put into receivership by its chief creditor, the Midland Bank.

It is understood that the last resort being discussed by the

Tottenham board is the sale of the White Hart Lane ground to the bank and its lease back. The ground is on the books at £21 million, but in a depressed property market might fetch no more than £12 million. It must also be doubted how Tottenham would be able to find a rental well in excess of £1 million a year.

If that deal fails, there remain at least two possibilities: either the bank puts the club into receivership, or the directors stall by requesting that the club be put under administration, a method of freezing the assets and preventing the bank getting at them.

The advantage to the buyer is that by waiting for the club to pass into the hands of the bank, it would be likely to be cheaper.

Speculation that Robert Maxwell, the chairman of Derby County, might re-emerge to mount a takeover attempt at White Hart Lane, after reducing his asking price for County by half to around £4 million, was unconfirmed. The newspaper publisher was in the United States yesterday.

At least two consortiums have lodged buy-out bids with Hill Samuel, who are handling the sale of Derby.

Hooligans injured

ROME (Reuters) — Football hooligans threw rocks at police, set rubbish bins on fire and smashed car windows near Rome's Olympic stadium after the UEFA Cup final between Internazionale and Roma on Wednesday. Seven policemen and 13 supporters were injured.

Internazionale lost the second leg 1-0, but won the cup 2-1 on aggregate.

The German football federation (DFB) said yesterday it would back government proposals to set up a databank of convicted hooligans after further trouble at an east German league match.

Two Argentine players were arrested for assaulting police after fighting involving photographers broke out during a South American club championship semi-final between Boca Juniors and the Chilean champions, Colo Colo, which Boca lost 3-1, on Wednesday.

One man who will not be there is the club's best known international before Trevor Francis — Gil Merrick, the former England goalkeeper. He was later manager of the Birmingham team which pioneered European competition, and which won their only trophy, the Football League Cup.

Merrick finds it hard to share the euphoria of the 40,000 supporters. His weekends are now reserved for a round of golf.

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